

Promoting Healthy Choices

Nutrition Manual for HACAP Food Reservoir Partners



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Introduction:

Although access to food is one of the most basic of human rights hunger and food insecurity continue to exist in the United States. Hunger—defined as the painful or uneasy sensation caused by an involuntary lack of food; typically precedes food insecurity, which involves anxiety about running out of food or running out of money to purchase more food. Not surprisingly, hunger rates drop as household income increases; however, food insecurity is not found only among very low-income families. Nearly two thirds of households with incomes below the federal poverty level are food secure, while some households with annual incomes well above the poverty line experience food insecurity. Loss of employment, medical expenses, or even holiday shopping can jeopardize a household's budget, leading to food insecurity and hunger. According to Feeding America, one in eight people in Iowa struggle with hunger on a daily basis. HACAP is helping to ensure that people within the six counties they serve have something to eat through food distribution to food pantries, food banks, and community feeding sites. The HACAP food reservoir distributes over 2,416,081 meals to people struggling with hunger annually. The annual income for Feeding America's population or clients is just \$9,175.

How can those who serve people in need educate them to make healthier and better options in the foods they prepare for their families? Sound evidence-based nutrition education can impact a person for a lifetime. As the price of junk food and less nutritional foods decreases at the same time that the price for healthy foods increase it is important more than ever to help lower income families learn how to improve their nutrition and make healthier choices for their families as well as themselves. If healthy food is to be our medicine, a cornerstone to health, there can be no compromises. Negative nutritional and non-nutritional outcomes have been associated with food insecurity in adults, adolescents, and children, including poor dietary intake and nutritional status, poor health, increased risk for the development of chronic diseases, poor psychological and cognitive functioning, and substandard academic achievement.

A significant decrease in the frequency of consumption of fruits and vegetables and the amount of food in the household and a significant increase in scores indicative of disordered eating patterns were associated with a worsening of food insecurity status. Potassium and fiber intake and fruit consumption differed significantly between the food secure and food insecure groups. The percentage of respondents consuming less than the Recommended Dietary Allowance for vitamin C and fewer than five fruits and vegetables per day was significantly greater among food insecure respondents than food secure respondents. The quantity of food available in households and consumption of fruits and vegetables decreased with increasingly severe problems with food insecurity and hunger.

A study put on by Altarum Institute and RTI International found that programs that had well-designed nutrition educations helped low-income families who participate in

government nutrition assistance programs make healthier choices overall. The study focused on fruit and vegetable consumption in school aged children and seniors. It found that the majority of people want to make healthy food choices but are limited because of their situations. Research found that those who participated in nutrition education that provided take home activities chose healthier behaviors and engaged in discussions about overcoming the challenges to purchasing, consuming, and preparing fruits and vegetables

The importance of improving a client's nutrition knowledge can have an amazing impact on their overall health and well-being. In the same Altarum study, they took participants from three states that participate in government programs and found that children who participated in nutrition education increased the vegetable and fruit consumption by a quarter to one third of a cup and were more likely to choose low fat milk and cheeses. The same study also found that senior who participated in nutrition educations increased their fruit and vegetable intake at home by about half a cup. "The findings from this study demonstrate the important role that evidence-based, outcome-driven interventions play in helping consumers improves their dietary intake," said Sheryl Cates, the RTI project director.

This manual will serve as an educational tool and resource guide for participants under the Feeding America umbrella to help encourage and teach participants about good health and better nutrition.

Section 1 – Nutritional Value

Identify healthy food

You can find "healthy foods" in all five food groups — look for options that are lower in added sugar, sodium, and saturated fat. Visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> for a review of the five food groups.

What you can do today

Read descriptions of healthy choices in the five food groups: <http://cookingmatters.org/sites/cookingmatters.org/files/CMYFP.pdf>

Prioritize your purchasing and decipher food label claims. Here are a list of foods to prioritize in your healthy foods purchasing and donations:

Fruits & Vegetables

- All fresh fruits and vegetables
- All frozen fruits and vegetables (low sodium, no added sugar)
- All canned vegetables (low sodium, no added sugar)
- All canned fruits (light syrup, canned in its own juice)

- 100% fruit or vegetable juice (no added sugars or sweeteners, low sodium, no added salt)

Dairy

- Low-fat or nonfat milk (unflavored)
- Low-fat to nonfat yogurt (plain or with real fruit)
- Low-fat or nonfat cheeses
- Milk alternatives: Soy, almond, coconut, or rice milk (unsweetened, fortified with Calcium and Vitamin D)

Proteins

- Lean or extra lean cuts of meat
- Fresh whole eggs
- Canned meats (canned in water)
- Fish (fresh, frozen, or canned in water) Canned/dry beans or lentils (no added sugar) Nuts/nut butters (unsalted, no added sugar)

Grains

- Colored Rice: Black, brown, red, wild rice
- Hearty whole grains: Amaranth, barley, bulgur, buckwheat, cornmeal, millet, oatmeal, quinoa, steel cut oats, rye, teff, wheatberries, 100% whole grain bread, whole wheat pasta

For additional information, visit: <http://thefoodgroupmn.org/content/uploads/2015/11/HealthyFoodsToPrioritizeGuide.pdf>

Determine if a food is healthy with this chart the Foods 2 Encourage Chart

Section 2 – Spreading the Word

Provide information about healthy food

Aim to provide simple, practical information on which foods to eat and how best to prepare them.

What you can do today

Review these handouts with simple tips about healthy choices and food preparation and choose one or two to

distribute: <http://cookingmatters.org/sites/cookingmatters.org/files/CMYFP.pdf> (p. 53-69)

Review these free printable materials about healthy food choices and choose one or two to distribute: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/printable-materials>

Contact Donna Smith, EFNEP Program Assistant at the Linn County Iowa State Extension office for training or education about making healthy food choices at 383 Collins Road NE, Suite 201, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
c: 319.775.2715 | p: 319.377.9839 ext.403 | f: 319.377.0475
dsmith@iastate.edu www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences

Find healthy recipes

Recipes encourage clients to try new foods or to prepare familiar foods in new ways. Recipes that can be prepared in thirty minutes or less are especially popular.

What you can do today

Review these frameworks that teach methods based on flexible ingredients: <http://cookingmatters.org/sites/cookingmatters.org/files/CMYFP.pdf> (p. 71-105)

There are many healthy recipes and other helpful resources at: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/food-nutrition-and-health>

The Extension also has an excellent program to help clients find healthy low-cost Recipes titled Spend Smart Eat Smart. Information can be found at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/>

Tips for success

Pair recipes with healthy foods you have available and hand out copies.

Focus on recipes that involve common, inexpensive ingredients readily available at the food pantry or grocery store.

Offer new recipes frequently so that regular clients can get new ideas.

Encourage clients to choose healthy food

Volunteers can be especially helpful in promoting the healthy foods available at the food pantry.

What you can do today

Empower volunteers to support clients. Provide them with information about the healthy options available that day at the start of their shift.

Request that volunteers speak positively about healthy foods regardless of their personal experience or preferences. For example, a volunteer who dislikes broccoli could still say to a client: "I've heard several people say they like it roasted, and kids seem to prefer it when you sprinkle a little cheese on top."

Ideas in action: prime, remind, support

Train volunteers to prime, remind, and support clients to choose, prepare, and eat healthy foods. The three parts of this strategy work like this:

Prime — Prime the client to choose healthy foods. Upon arrival, let the client know about specific healthy options that they may want to try are available. For example: *“I’ll be helping you today. I’m happy to let you know that we have some fresh vegetables in sweet potatoes. Do you think you could use some of those?”*

Remind — Remind the client about the healthy foods when you come to that section. For example: *“Here’s those low-sodium beans we talked about. Try some?”*

Support — Support the client in choosing, preparing, and eating the healthy foods by suggesting preparation tips. For example: *“Have you cooked with the whole wheat pasta before? You make it . . .”*

This strategy is useful in both food pantries that offer clients a choice-based shopping experience and in food pantries that pre-box/bag the food allocated for a family. Even when the client does not choose which foods to take, they do choose whether they prepare and eat the foods at home.

Section 3 – Staging a Food Pantry to Support Nutritional Food Choices

Display healthy food

For food pantries that offer a choice-based shopping experience, how you display food makes a tremendous difference in what clients choose. Clean, attractive, and colorful displays are very encouraging. If you currently pre-box/bag produce for clients, you may want to consider switching to a choice-based shopping experience, or offer choice-based shopping for fresh produce. This model allows clients to choose the healthy foods they prefer, which can help you make the best use of resources and allocate your spending to preferred foods.

What you can do today

Position the healthiest offerings in the places that are easiest to see, such as at eye level, and place them near the beginning of the shopping experience.

Search the Internet for “fresh produce display images” to get ideas about how to make your food look attractive to clients.

Call out healthy items with attractive, easy-to-read signage.

The Linn County Iowa State extension office features many no-cost/low-cost posters, brochures and educational information that can help inform clients as they enter the pantry. <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/food-nutrition-and-health>

For more informative images and explanations of several strategies to improve food pantry displays: <http://thefoodgroupmn.org/promote-fresh-produce-toolkit/>

Watch this short video on staging food from the Energy Food Network <https://www.youtube.com/embed/TO60lvUbr8U>

The Food Group has a terrific also has a merchandising and stocking checklist with strategies to move healthy food off the shelf and into homes. They also have eat fresh posters and other materials which can help drive healthy choices <http://thefoodgroupmn.org/promote-fresh-produce-toolkit/>

Feeding America has been working with Cornell University on evidence-based nutrition education strategies to help increase the consumption of healthy foods by those served across the nation. This video highlights one strategy in particular, known as “nudges.” These small environmental cues or changes in one’s environment can make an impact on food choices and, ultimately, health. Additional information can be found under the Nutrition Education section of this site. <https://healthyfoodbankhub.feedingamerica.org/nudges/> Watch a short video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJmgN5wavNY&index=68&list=PLKWIHHyoS35qihjPY3fzQtfmfE4RfNTuw>

Tips for success

Display healthy food in prominent, visible locations that are well lit, such as near the front entrance or in the center of the space.

Arrange food in baskets or bins, or on a checkered table cloth.

Remove any spoiled food from the display area immediately.

Display recipes next to healthy items.

Group the ingredients for healthy recipes together. This strategy is called “cross-merchandising.” For suggestions on how to group items to encourage clients to choose healthy food <http://thefoodgroupmn.org/promote-fresh-produce-toolkit/>

Section 4 – Food Sourcing

Source Healthy Food

Once you know which healthy foods you are looking for and which foods you want to limit, start communicating with your distributors and donors. With donors, be direct about which foods are most appreciated.

What you can do today

Ask the HACAP Food Reservoir staff first if they have healthy foods you're looking for available and then how you can get more of them more often.

Draft a policy that addresses selection of foods and solicited donations.

Put together a brochure or flyer communicating to donors which foods are most appreciated.

For a sample healthy food donation request letter and suggested donation items:

<http://cookingmatters.org/sites/cookingmatters.org/files/CMYFP.pdf>
(p. 9-11)

Survey clients about which healthy foods, especially what kind of produce, they prefer.

Tips for success

Be specific when you solicit food donations. For example, ask for whole wheat pasta, low-sodium soup, frozen vegetables, etc.

Remember that cash donations allow you to purchase the healthy foods you may not get through other sources.

Ideas in action: Fruit and Vegetable Bucks

One strategy for sourcing produce is to work with your local chamber of commerce and grocery store(s) to implement a Fruit and Vegetable (FV) Bucks program. Here's the process:

1. You distribute FV Bucks to local grocery stores to display at their register.
2. Shoppers buy FV Bucks'
3. Grocery stores forward the proceeds to your food shelf for you to purchase produce.

Work with local farmers or community gardeners

Local growers of all kinds can be a great source of fresh produce for food pantries, but they may not know that you accept fresh produce donations or have funds to purchase fresh produce.

What you can do today

Assess your storage so that you do not receive more than you can safely store and distribute. Ask growers for tips on how to store the produce they grow.

Locate farmers and farmers markets near you: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/food-nutrition-and-health>

Tell growers which produce you can best use and when and how to get it. If necessary, remind growers that you are unable to accept spoiled produce.

Visit your local farmers markets. These can be good venues for connecting with local farmers and can sometimes be a source of low-cost or donated produce once market hours have ended. Find volunteers to pick up available produce.

Purchase a share of produce from a farmer in the winter or spring and receive installments throughout the harvesting season (this is sometimes called a CSA, for “community supported agriculture”) <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/food-nutrition-and-health>.

Ensure safety of healthy food

Monitor the safety of healthy food the same way you monitor the safety of any other food. If necessary, remind donors that you are unable to accept spoiled or damaged food.

What you can do today

Review basic food donation safety considerations:
<http://cookingmatters.org/sites/cookingmatters.org/files/CMYFP.pdf>
(p. 12)

Store healthy food

Different foods have different storage requirements. Storing food in optimal conditions will preserve the flavor and quality.

What you can do today

Make sure that you are storing your produce correctly with these simple instructions from Rutgers University (for full poster visit:
http://www.cfbnj.org/_assets/library/2013/01/Fresh-Produce-Guidelines-for-Pantries.pdf)

Tips for success

Be sure to remove any spoiled food immediately. One spoiled item can cause food around it to spoil.

If you have limited cold storage and limited hours of operation, coordinate the timing and amount of your fresh food donations with your distribution so that food does not spoil before clients can take it.

If your turnover is slower, prioritize foods with a longer shelf life.

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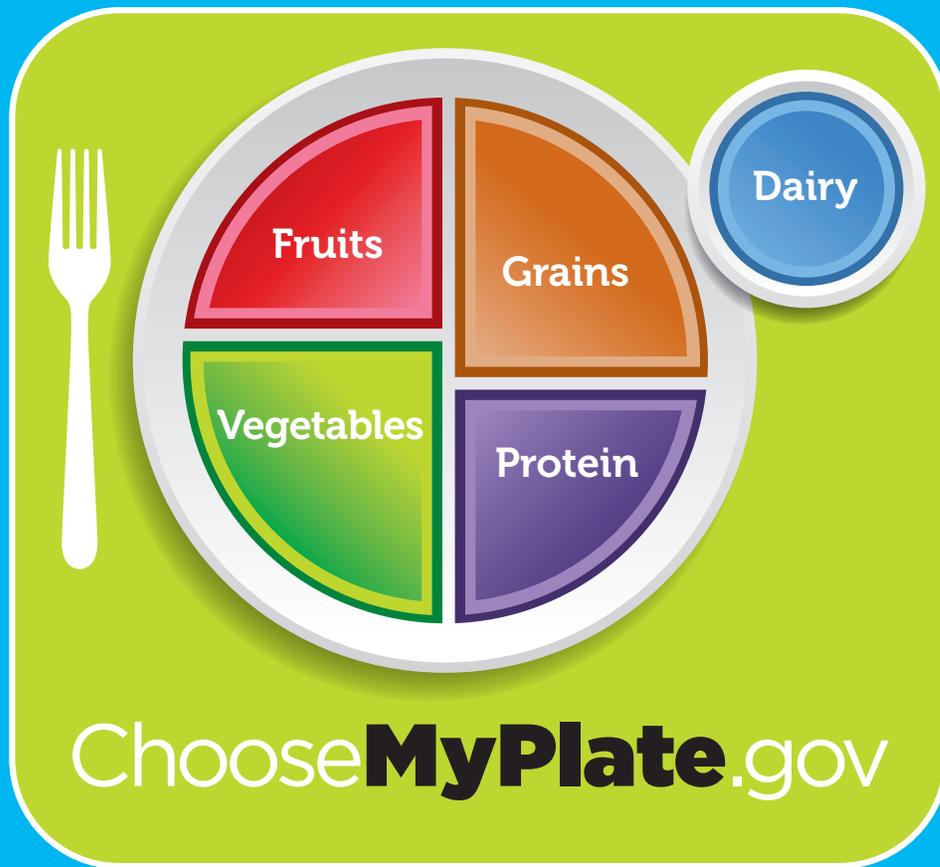
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What's on your plate?



Before you eat, think about what and how much food goes on your plate or in your cup or bowl. Over the day, include foods from all food groups: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods.



Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.



Make at least half your grains whole.



Switch to skim or 1% milk.



Vary your protein food choices.

Vegetables	Fruits	Grains	Dairy	Protein Foods
<p>Eat more red, orange, and dark-green veggies like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli in main dishes.</p> <p>Add beans or peas to salads (kidney or chickpeas), soups (split peas or lentils), and side dishes (pinto or baked beans), or serve as a main dish.</p> <p>Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables all count. Choose “reduced sodium” or “no-salt-added” canned veggies.</p>	<p>Use fruits as snacks, salads, and desserts. At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes.</p> <p>Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice), as well as fresh fruits.</p> <p>Select 100% fruit juice when choosing juices.</p>	<p>Substitute whole-grain choices for refined-grain breads, bagels, rolls, breakfast cereals, crackers, rice, and pasta.</p> <p>Check the ingredients list on product labels for the words “whole” or “whole grain” before the grain ingredient name.</p> <p>Choose products that name a whole grain first on the ingredients list.</p>	<p>Choose skim (fat-free) or 1% (low-fat) milk. They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories.</p> <p>Top fruit salads and baked potatoes with low-fat yogurt.</p> <p>If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or fortified soymilk (soy beverage).</p>	<p>Eat a variety of foods from the protein food group each week, such as seafood, beans and peas, and nuts as well as lean meats, poultry, and eggs.</p> <p>Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.</p> <p>Choose lean meats and ground beef that are at least 90% lean.</p> <p>Trim or drain fat from meat and remove skin from poultry to cut fat and calories.</p>

For a 2,000-calorie daily food plan, you need the amounts below from each food group.
To find amounts personalized for you, go to ChooseMyPlate.gov.

<p>Eat 2½ cups every day</p> <p>What counts as a cup? 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice; 2 cups of leafy salad greens</p>	<p>Eat 2 cups every day</p> <p>What counts as a cup? 1 cup of raw or cooked fruit or 100% fruit juice; ½ cup dried fruit</p>	<p>Eat 6 ounces every day</p> <p>What counts as an ounce? 1 slice of bread; ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal, or pasta; 1 ounce of ready-to-eat cereal</p>	<p>Get 3 cups every day</p> <p>What counts as a cup? 1 cup of milk, yogurt, or fortified soymilk; 1½ ounces natural or 2 ounces processed cheese</p>	<p>Eat 5½ ounces every day</p> <p>What counts as an ounce? 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; 1 egg; 1 Tbsp peanut butter; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; ¼ cup beans or peas</p>
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Cut back on sodium and empty calories from solid fats and added sugars



Look out for salt (sodium) in foods you buy. Compare sodium in foods and choose those with a lower number.

Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Eat sugary desserts less often.

Make foods that are high in solid fats—such as cakes, cookies, ice cream, pizza, cheese, sausages, and hot dogs—occasional choices, not every day foods.

Limit empty calories to less than 260 per day, based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Be physically active your way

Pick activities you like and do each for at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up, and health benefits increase as you spend more time being active.

Children and adolescents: get 60 minutes or more a day.

Adults: get 2 hours and 30 minutes or more a week of activity that requires moderate effort, such as brisk walking.



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SHARE OUR STRENGTH'S
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Introduction

About Share Our Strength® and Cooking Matters

No child should grow up hungry in America, but one in five children struggles with hunger. Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry® campaign is ending childhood hunger in this nation by connecting kids in need with nutritious food and teaching families how to cook healthy, affordable meals. You can help surround kids with the nutritious food they need where they live, learn and play. Pledge to make No Kid Hungry a reality at NoKidHungry.org.

Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters® empowers low-income families with the skills to stretch their food budgets so their children get healthy meals at home, as part of the No Kid Hungry campaign to end childhood hunger in America. Cooking Matters serves families across the country through hands-on, six-week cooking courses; interactive grocery store tours; and mobile, online and educational tools. Participants learn to shop smarter, use nutrition information to make healthier choices, and cook delicious, affordable meals. Cooking Matters is nationally sponsored by Walmart. To learn more, visit CookingMatters.org.

About *Cooking Matters in Your Food Pantry*

A significant decrease in the frequency of consumption of fruits and vegetables were associated with a worsening of food insecurity status. Built upon the proven success of our signature courses that teach families how to cook and eat healthy on a budget, this toolkit provides tips, activities, and recipes that can be used to execute a successful food-based demonstration while introducing key nutrition and food budgeting messages. All foods included in the activities and recipes provided here are chosen based on their accessibility and affordability for the limited-resource families that Cooking Matters and its partner organizations serve. This resource also provides useful tools to help ensure that your pantry can provide healthy foods to your local community.

We hope that you find this guide useful as you plan and carry out your demonstration and identify healthy foods to stock in your pantry. Thank you for sharing your strength with families in your community and for your commitment to ensuring families get the nutritious foods they need to thrive.

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Shelf-stable food items make up a large percentage of pantry inventories, but many food pantries also distribute some perishable foods. If your facility has appropriate storage, offering these types of foods can increase the variety and nutritional content of your food choices.

- 3. Team up with a local garden — or start your own.** Just like many families today, food pantries often struggle to get fresh produce on their shelves. Consider teaming up with community, school, or backyard gardens close to your pantry. A great way to start is to register your pantry at www.ampleharvest.org so local gardeners who want to donate food can find you. Or, if you have the space, consider starting your own garden on-site.

For more information on starting a local produce donation program, check out the Food-Systems Toolbox at <http://livewellcolorado.org/healthy-policy/food-systems-toolbox/community-food-assistance>. It provides helpful case studies, tips, and tools.

- 4. Build relationships with local grocers and farmers.** Grocery stores often have produce or other foods that they are unable to sell but that are still in good condition. Try developing a relationship with a grocery store manager to see if he or she would be willing to donate these items. Use the Healthy Food Donations list on page 10 to encourage healthier donations. Another strategy is to develop a relationship with farmers at a local farmers market. Ask to collect any unsold produce after the market closes.

Be sure all foods donated to your pantry are safe to eat. Check out the Food-Safety Guidelines for Pantry Donations on page 12.



Vegetables

- Fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables are all great options. Fresh vegetables are typically at their best when they are in season. Canned and frozen can be great year-round options.
- Look for frozen and canned vegetables with no salt, fat, or sauces added. Canned vegetables should say “low sodium” or “no salt added.” Otherwise, advise clients to rinse and drain canned vegetables before using. This can reduce the sodium content by roughly 40%.
- Vegetable juice counts in this group. Be sure the label says 100% juice.

Grains

- Try to stock as many whole grain options as possible. MyPlate recommends that half of our grain choices each day are whole grains. See pages 28 and 54 for more information on determining whether a food is a whole grain.
- Try offering a variety of foods from the grain group — for example, bread, pasta, tortillas, oatmeal, cereals, rice, barley, bulgur, and rolled oats.

Protein

- Foods made from meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, processed soy products, nuts, and seeds are all considered part of the Protein group. Try offering a variety of protein foods for good health.
- Great shelf-stable protein options include canned tuna, canned chicken, canned and dried beans or peas, nuts, and nut butters.
- Meat and poultry choices should be lean or low-fat.

Dairy

- Adults and kids (ages 2 and up) should consume dairy products, such as milk, yogurt, and cheese, that are fat-free or low-fat (1%).
- Great shelf-stable options include dried nonfat milk, canned nonfat or low-fat milk, or shelf-stable calcium-fortified non-dairy milk (such as soy or almond milk).
- Try offering non-dairy calcium-fortified options for individuals who are allergic or intolerant to dairy, such as calcium-fortified soy, almond, or rice milk; lactose-free milk; orange juice; and cereal.

Sample Healthy Donation Request Letter

Dear **[Insert donor name, organization, etc.]**,

[Food pantry name] is working to improve our ability to provide healthy options for our clients. Please take a moment to consider supporting the pantry and our clients by making a healthy food donation.

Food banks and pantries were originally created to fill a one-time “emergency” need for their clients. In recent economic times however, food banks and pantries are now part of many families’ ongoing strategies to supplement monthly food shortfalls. Since more and more families use food pantries on a regular basis, it is vital that pantries offer healthy options for their clients.

Currently, **[1 in 5 children in Colorado]** are at risk of hunger. In addition, there is evidence that hunger and obesity are linked. If an individual is food insecure, meaning they have limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, they are at a much higher risk of becoming obese. Pantry clients are often at the mercy of the donations they receive. We want to help them take home foods filled with the nutrients they and their children need for healthy living — not foods full of fat, sugars, and empty calories.

Our aim is to provide a healthy and delicious selection for **[insert pantry name]’s** clients — and we hope that you’ll support us in this effort. We ask that you consider the attached list of healthy foods when making your donation. The list gives examples of basic nutritious items. For instance, many pantries are in great need of spices and condiments, which allow clients to flavor their meals without the need for added salt. In addition, choosing canned beans and vegetables with “no salt added” and fruits canned “in their own juices” helps families reduce their sodium and sugar intake. Donating items like these can help ensure that clients and their children receive healthy foods they can feel good about.

If you are interested in making a donation, please contact **[insert contact info]**. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

[Insert food pantry name & contact info]

Healthy Foods Donation List

Fruits and Vegetables

Donate fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors. Look for fruit canned in its own juice or with “no sugar added.” Look for canned vegetables that say “low sodium” or “no salt added.” Look for 100% fruit and vegetable juices.

- Canned fruits or vegetables
- Diced tomatoes
- Dried fruit
- Fresh fruits or vegetables*
- Frozen fruits or vegetables*
- Fruit juice (100%)
- Shelf-stable fruit cups
- Spaghetti sauce
- Tomato sauce
- Vegetable juice (100%)

Grains

Donate whole grains as often as you can. Look for **100% whole grain** on the package or look for a whole grain as the **first** ingredient on the ingredient list.

- Brown rice or barley
- Low-sugar, high-fiber cereal
- Oatmeal
- Quinoa
- Whole grain breads*
- Whole grain crackers
- Whole grain pasta
- Whole grain tortillas*
- Whole wheat flour

Protein

Donate canned beans, seafood, and lean meats as a good source of lean protein. Look for “**no salt added,**” **low-sodium, and canned in water** (instead of oil) varieties.

- Canned beans
- Canned chilis and stews
- Dried beans and peas
- Canned chicken, tuna, or salmon
- Eggs*
- Nuts
- Peanut butter or other nut butters

*These items are suggested only if safe storage is possible.

Dairy

Donate shelf-stable **low-fat (1%) or non-fat dairy** products.

- Boxed shelf-stable milk
- Calcium-fortified milk alternatives such as soy, rice, or almond milks
- Dry milk
- Evaporated milk
- Low-fat cheese*
- Low-fat plain yogurt*

Fats and Oils

Donate shelf-stable healthy fats that are liquid at room temperature.

- Canola oil
- Non-stick cooking spray
- Olive oil
- Vegetable oil

Spices and Condiments

Donate dry, ground herbs and spices whenever possible. By donating spices you help enable pantry clients to flavor their food without a lot of added salt.

- Basil
- Bay leaves
- Black pepper
- Cayenne pepper
- Chili powder
- Cinnamon
- Cumin
- Curry powder
- Dill
- Garlic powder
- Mustard
- Onion powder
- Oregano
- Parsley
- Red pepper flakes
- Rosemary
- Salsa (jarred)
- Thyme
- Vanilla extract

*These items are suggested only if safe storage is possible.



Food Safety Guidelines for Pantry Donations

Many pantries rely on donations to stock their pantries. When accepting food donations, consider both safety and quality. Use the following guidelines to decide whether foods are unsafe and should not be allowed in your food pantry. For more information refer to www.foodsafety.gov.

Do not accept:

- Cans with moderate or severe dents
- Cans with rust pits severe enough to make a hole in the can
- Cans with swollen or bulging ends or any holes
- Home-canned foods
- Foods with signs of spoilage (spurting, unusual odor or appearance, mold) when opened
- Foods with a missing or illegible label
- Baby food or infant formula past the expiration date
- Glass jars with missing lids
- Cardboard boxes with torn or missing inner packaging
- Food in packaging that is slit or open
- Food with any evidence of insects
- Refrigerated foods that are lukewarm or in the temperature “danger zone” (40–140 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Food in unsuitable containers and/or covers (e.g., those that allow food to be contaminated)
- Food with an uncertain handling history
- Frozen foods with evidence of thawing or food leakage

When in doubt, throw it out! Don't rely solely on look or smell. Foods that cause food poisoning may look and smell okay. Never taste suspicious foods.

achieve that goal. It will also help you narrow down which recipes and activities to use. In this guide we provide sample demo plans for four different messages that may be of interest to you and your food pantry. These sample plans, found on pages 33–36, include suggested activities and recipes for a particular message based on a particular amount of time you may have available. The sample plans are intended to help, but not limit you, in your planning. Please note that most activities in this guide can be modified and shortened based on available time. Feel free to look through all the activities and recipes provided in the guide and create your own pairings based on a message of your choosing.

- **Consider the interests and food preferences of your audience.** Hold conversations with others in your pantry about what types of foods are popular with this audience, what foods this audience may want to learn how to cook, or what foods you have available that you may want to promote or highlight. Keep in mind the different characteristics of your target audience so you can choose culturally-, economically-, and age-appropriate foods.
- **Consider how much time you will have available.** Plan the number of activities and recipes that can be completed in the amount of time you have. Think about both the total time of the event and how long you expect any single participant to spend at your demo.

Choosing a Location

Keep the following considerations in mind as you choose an appropriate site for your demo:

- Spaces should have sinks available for hand and food washing. If this is not possible, wash hands and food in advance and remember to bring hand sanitizer and gloves.
- Additional kitchen equipment can be helpful but is not necessary. Many of the recipes in this guide can be prepared without it. If using, check whether there are sufficient electrical outlets and extension cords for burners, blenders, or other equipment.
- Spaces should have adequate room for working with the number of participants expected.
- Consider using the waiting area of the pantry if available. This space may provide a great opportunity to educate clients as they are waiting to “shop” in the pantry.

Prior to your demo, always plan on doing a thorough walk-through of the space with anyone who will be assisting with the event to inform them of the location of the restrooms, emergency exits, trash cans, recycling bins, etc. This helps avoid surprises and can set your co-planners or co-facilitators at ease. This is also a good time to check the availability of any supplies or equipment on-site, so you will not need to purchase or bring from home.

If you plan on bringing or using equipment on-site, check to make sure it works well in advance of your demo.

Choosing a Date and Time

When planning your demo date, consider whether it should be held on its own or could be incorporated into a pre-planned, larger event that may encourage higher attendance. If not part of a larger event, think well in advance about the best date and time for holding your demo. Try to plan your event to coincide with high-traffic times that may be able to draw a larger audience. Avoid dates or times that may result in lower than normal attendance.

Staffing Your Demonstration

You will need to estimate the size of your audience to determine how many individuals are needed to staff the demo. Based on those numbers, consider the following:

- How many food samples will be prepared? How many individuals are needed to prepare this many samples? Will this be done in advance or on site?
- How many individuals are needed to help pass out samples, recipes, or other handouts?
- How many individuals are needed to help field questions about the recipes, healthy eating, your mission, or other topics? Who are the most appropriate people to answer each of these types of questions?
- If you are repeating the demo for many hours, or a full day, will you have enough individuals to take shifts?
- What other skill sets would be helpful to have on hand (e.g., a registered dietitian, professional chef, or community outreach worker who can help connect participants to federal nutrition programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) or Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program?

You should also think about any assistance you may need to help prep your materials before the demo (e.g., shopping for groceries, prepping ingredients). Consider asking for extra staff during the demo to help oversee the audience, troubleshoot any problems with the space, and answer any audience questions you may not know the answer to.

When recruiting volunteers to help lead your demo, make sure to educate them on the typical demographics of your food-pantry clients, as well as their motivations and barriers to healthy eating.

Consider reaching out to some of your volunteers or others in the community to help lead your demonstration. Nutrition or dietetic students, church volunteers, or other community members may be good resources to help support your event. You might want to ask a professional chef, culinary student, or someone with a culinary background, if he or she would be willing to lead or assist with the cooking portion of the demo. Chefs can give the audience great tips and alternative preparation ideas, as well as answer general questions about cooking.



Securing Resources

Each activity and recipe in this guide provides a list of foods and materials needed. Recipes have been chosen for their appropriateness for low-income families so food costs should be reasonable; however, all materials and food will have some cost, particularly for larger audiences. Thus, you may want to assess what resources are already available at your pantry (such as equipment, paper plates, utensils, and food) then seek donations for additional needs. You can also look for small grant opportunities available through service or grant-making organizations in your community to fund your demonstration.

Choosing Foods for Your Demonstration

The recipes in this guide, as well as the suggested foods to use in the activities, have been chosen based on their proven appeal to a wide range of audiences and their adherence to Cooking Matters standards. While you are encouraged to use the recipes included here, you may want to consider substituting foods that are in season or commonly available within your food pantry and geographic location. If you wish to use your own recipes for the demonstration, the guidelines on pages 23–24 may be helpful for thinking about appropriate recipes for your audience.

Determine in advance whether refrigeration is available at your site. If not, select foods that do not require refrigeration or that can safely be transported and stored in a cooler for the duration of the demo.

Limiting Liability

Though the risks are small, take necessary precautions to limit liability:

- Ask if you are covered for liability through your organization or food pantry. If you are not, you may wish to have participants sign a brief waiver before taking food samples. A sample waiver is provided on page 22, but be sure to have your legal counsel review your final waiver before using.
- Follow proper food safety protocol at all times. A list of online food safety resources can be found on page 30.
- Clearly label food allergens. Food allergies can be associated with any food, but most reactions are triggered by just eight foods: milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, soy, wheat, peanuts and tree nuts. If using, be sure to label any foods that contain these ingredients.
- Make sure to familiarize yourself with the emergency preparedness plans or evacuation routes to be aware of (e.g., in the event of a fire or setting off the smoke alarm).
- Keep a first-aid kit on hand if your facility does not provide one.

III. Planning Tools

Initial Planning Checklist

Planning Steps	Expected Completion Date	Check When Complete
Identify goals or a vision for your demo.	___/___/___	
Choose a date and time for your demo.	___/___/___	
Choose a location for your demo.	___/___/___	
Choose foods, recipes, and activities for your demo.	___/___/___	
Determine the number of demo leaders and assistants needed and recruit them.	___/___/___	
Secure resources for purchasing foods and materials.	___/___/___	
Investigate whether you are covered for liability already. If not, make sufficient copies of the waivers for the demo (page 22).	___/___/___	
Determine if and how you will evaluate your demo.	___/___/___	
Complete the "My Demo Day Plan" planning tool (page 37) or outline your anticipated sequence of events.	___/___/___	
Run through the roles and responsibilities with all involved parties.	___/___/___	

Final Planning Checklist

Confirm with your site supervisor:

- Demo date and time are final.
- The demo space will be cleared and made ready in advance.
- The demo space will be convenient to electricity and/or an oven (if applicable).

Confirm for yourself:

- All materials and foods needed for the demo are gathered or purchased.
- If possible, a site visit to the demo location has been conducted to familiarize yourself with:
 - Emergency exits
 - Restrooms
 - Trash and recycle bins
 - Water sources
 - Electrical outlets
 - Materials available on-site
 - Key contacts
- Advanced prep work for food is complete (e.g., fruits and veggies are washed, canned veggies are rinsed).
- Photocopies of any handouts, recipes, liability waivers, evaluations, outreach materials, or other forms being used at the demo have been made for the expected number of attendees.
- Nutrition messages have been reviewed (pages 27–28).
- Cooking messages have been reviewed (pages 25–26).
- The “My Demo Day Plan” template (page 37) has been completed and reviewed.

Confirm with all demo leaders or assistants:

- Demonstrators know the date and time of the demo.
- Demonstrators have directions to the space.
- Demonstrators know which tasks they are responsible for (e.g., which foods to prep).
- Demonstrators know which portions of the demo they will be leading (if applicable).

Tools and Equipment Checklist

Consider whether you will need the equipment and supplies below to conduct, serve, and clean up your demonstration. These items are in addition to the materials specifically listed on the recipes and activities.

Be sure you have collected what you need well in advance of the demo.

- Aprons or other protective clothing
- Extension cords (for demos requiring electricity)
- Can opener
- Hair covers (e.g., hats, hairnets)
- Disposable gloves
- Pot holders
- Soap and dish detergent
- Antibacterial wipes or gel
- Dish towels, tablecloths, and wash cloths
- Paper towels
- Scrubbing pads or sponges
- Tin foil or plastic wrap
- Kitchen timer
- Large baking sheets (for holding or transporting samples)
- Storage containers
- Cups, plates, and utensils for samples
- Napkins
- Additional ingredients for display
- First-aid kit



Consider bringing flyers or outreach materials to promote appropriate federal nutrition programs such as SNAP, WIC, or school or summer meals programs. Find outreach materials using the links on page 30, or check out these resources:

Summer Meals Flyer

<http://www.strength.org/sm-assets/summer-meals-2012-flyer.pdf>

School Breakfast Marketing Resources

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Breakfast/expansion/marketingresources.htm>

Afterschool Program Outreach Brochures

<http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/afterschool-programs/outreach-materials/>

Sample Waiver

Participation Waiver and Release

Please read, and if you agree to the statement, please initial each section on the lines below. Sign and date at the bottom of the page.

Participation Waiver

Liability Waiver: I want to participate in this cooking demo, and recognize that it could present potential cooking hazards including but not limited to: cuts, burns, slips, falls, allergic reactions, and other injuries as a result of activities, products, and equipment used. I release [INSERT YOUR NAME AND/OR ORGANIZATION], [INSERT COMMUNITY PARTNER], its agents, representatives, employees, volunteers, and any sponsors from any and all damages, causes of action, claims, and liability that might arise from my participation in this demo.

Initials _____

Media Release

I consent to and allow any use and reproduction by [INSERT YOUR NAME AND/OR ORGANIZATION] or [INSERT COMMUNITY PARTNER] of any and all photographs or videotapes taken of me and my child(ren) during my participation in this demo. I understand that [INSERT YOUR NAME AND/OR ORGANIZATION] and [INSERT COMMUNITY PARTNER] will own the photographs and videotape and the right to use or reproduce such photographs and videotape in any media, as well as the right to edit them or prepare derivative works, for the purposes of promotion, advertising, and public relations. I hereby consent to [INSERT YOUR NAME AND/OR ORGANIZATION]'s and [INSERT COMMUNITY PARTNER]'s use of my name, likeness, or voice, and I agree that such use will not result in any liability to these parties for payment to any person or organization, including myself.

Initials _____

I further acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

Signature

Date

Name (please print)

2. **Recipes should be nutritious.** Recipes should reinforce the Cooking Matters nutrition messages and any nutrition education offered through your food pantry. Use these guidelines:
 - **Vary the forms, types, and colors of fruits and vegetables.** Aim for at least three different colors of fruits and vegetables.
 - **Choose whole grains instead of refined grains.** If using flour, use at least half whole wheat flour.
 - **Minimize the use of added sugars.** For example, choose fruits canned in juice rather than syrup. Or consider whether you can use fruit to sweeten a dish as opposed to adding sugar.
 - **Use leaner cooking techniques and ingredients.** For example, bake, grill, or steam instead of frying. Use canola oil instead of butter or margarine. Choose leaner cuts of meat, or use non-meat proteins (beans are a great source of protein and widely available at many pantries). Choose dairy ingredients that are low-fat or nonfat (e.g., made with skim or 1% milk).
 - **Limit sodium.** Choose canned ingredients that are low-sodium or no-salt added whenever possible. If a food is not considered low-sodium, drain and rinse ingredients under water to reduce sodium content. Flavor with spices and herbs instead of salt.
 - **Use multiple food groups.** If creating a snack or dessert recipe, aim to include at least two MyPlate food groups. If it's a breakfast or entrée, aim for at least three food groups.
3. **Recipes should limit the use of special equipment.** Equipment should be obtainable and affordable for the audience. Try to stick to items that would be available in the average kitchen. Consider whether each item is really necessary and whether it could be replaced with a less costly tool. For example, use a knife instead of a pizza cutter or a colander instead of a strainer. Mix by hand instead of using an electric mixer. Blenders can be used when the recipe cannot be made properly without it — but avoid calling for food processors, which are less common. Consider referring clients to a local thrift store or garage sales for low-cost equipment.
4. **Recipes should be relatively quick to prepare.** Audience participants have busy lives and are members of busy families. To encourage them to cook at home, create recipes that can be made in the time a typical family would have available on a busy weeknight. Aim for total time-to-table of no more than 45 minutes to an hour, including both prep and cooking time. Include these times on the recipes.
5. **Recipes should be simple and explained clearly.** Write the instructions in short, succinct, numbered steps. Use the recipes in this book as a guide to ensure that the recipe is written at an appropriate level for the audience.
6. **Consider using no-cook recipes for your demo.** This is particularly helpful if your demo is held with participants who may not have access to refrigeration or cooking equipment.

→ **Fun Tip #2:** Temperature truths

- Hot pan, cold oil. Always heat your pan over medium heat before adding fat. When the pan is hot, add a small amount of oil. When the oil is hot, add the food.
- Slow and low. The best way to cook foods in liquid is at low temperatures for a long time. Stewing and braising break down tough fibers and bring out flavors. They are great ways to cook leaner meats.
- High and fast. A lot of heat for a short amount of time is the best way to seal in flavors without using much fat. Seal in a crust on meat or fish. Stir-fry veggies to keep a nice crunch.

Step 3: Create an organized demo environment. Try these tips:

- **Provide an overview.** Let participants know what they will be expected to do during this demo. Pass out copies of the recipe and review it together. Explain what their roles will be (e.g., this half of the table will combine these wet ingredients while the other half combines the dry ingredients).
- **Demonstrate the skills.** Before passing out ingredients and allowing participants to begin, demonstrate the key skills. Use just enough of each ingredient to show participants the basic technique and any safety tips.
- **Talk while participants prep.** Use the time when participants are prepping to introduce talking points or tips. This will help keep the demo moving and use time efficiently.

Running short on time? Try these tricks in a pinch:

- Cut food into smaller pieces so it cooks faster.
- Do prep work for more than one recipe at the same time.
- Demonstrate only the more complex steps. For easier steps that participants are most likely familiar with (e.g., peeling veggies, boiling pasta), just explain what you have done.

Message 3: Choose whole grains as often as you can.

Whole grains are called “whole” because they contain the entire kernel of grain. Refined grains are called “refined” because during processing, parts of the grain kernel are removed. The parts that are removed contain important vitamins and nutrients. “Enriched” grains add back in only some of the vitamins and nutrients; they do not contain the entire grain kernel and are not whole grains. Use simple analogies that will help the audience understand the importance of choosing whole grains. For instance, whole grains are like a broom that sweeps through the body and removes the “bad stuff,” just like a broom removes dirt from a house. It’s also appropriate to teach your audience how to identify whole grain foods. The trick is simple — look at the first ingredient in the ingredients list. If the first ingredient is a whole grain (like whole wheat flour, whole grain oats, brown rice, or bulgur), then the food is a whole grain. Most importantly, let your audience taste how delicious whole grains can be! Many people have very little experience with whole grains — you can open up a whole new world of tastes by letting them explore these foods.

Message 4: Compare food labels to make healthier choices.

Food labels may seem complicated, but simple messages about comparing labels are fairly easy to understand. Show the audience a sample label from an actual food package, or use the sample label on the Label Lingo handout (page 63). Start by focusing on the number of servings in the package. People often do not realize that a single package or bottle (for instance, a 20-ounce soda) can actually contain multiple servings. Show the audience the amount in one serving (for instance, by pouring out 8 ounces of the soda into a glass) and the amount in the entire package. Ask them how much they would typically eat or drink. If there are two servings within the package and people say they would eat it all, then everything on the label must be multiplied by 2 to give you the nutrition facts for the amount they would eat.

Next, explain that you can compare labels for different foods and beverages to find out which one has lower amounts of less desirable nutrients (such as sugar, sodium, and saturated fat). You may wish to focus on a single nutrient, such as sugar for beverages. Have the audience compare the amounts of that nutrient across multiple packages, keeping in mind the number of servings per package. Ask them to choose the one with the lower number.

Wrap up discussions about labels by reminding the audience that many healthy foods, like fruits and vegetables, do not even have labels. Encourage them to make their own foods and drinks when they can and to include plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 1/2 cups (346g)	
Servings per Package 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 160	Calories from Fat 100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 11g	17%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 14g	5%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 7g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 15%	Vitamin C 45%

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 1/2 cups (346g)	
Servings per Package 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 160	Calories from Fat 100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 11g	17%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 14g	5%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 7g	
Protein 3g	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	

Sample Participant Evaluation Form

Please take a few moments to answer the following questions. Your responses are completely confidential and voluntary.

Circle your response.

1. Please give this demonstration an overall rating.

Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. Please give the instructor an overall rating.

Excellent Good Fair Poor

3. What did you like best about the demonstration?

4. What did you like least about the demonstration?

5. Would you consider attending another demonstration in the future?

Yes No

6. Have you, or other members of your household, participated in any of the following programs in the last year? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WIC | <input type="checkbox"/> Head Start |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) | <input type="checkbox"/> Food pantry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free or reduced-price school breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not participate in any of the above programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Free or reduced-price school lunch | |

Use the space below to leave any messages or comments for the instructor.

Thank you for completing this evaluation!

Online Resources for Demo Leaders

Healthy Pantry Resources

www.ampleharvest.org
www.feedingamerica.org
www.livewellcolorado.org/foodsystms
www.tafb.org/documents/ChoicePantryGuide.pdf
<http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/>

Food Safety

Safe Food Handling

www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling
www.foodsafety.gov
www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/index.html
www.foodsafety.gov/keep/basics/index.html

Safe Food Serving

www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/servingsafe_chapter4.pdf

Food Assistance Programs

SNAP

<http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/snap>
www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=2226

WIC

<http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/early-childhood-nutrition>
<http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/wic/>

TEFAP

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap/>

School Breakfast

<http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/school-breakfast>
<http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/school-breakfast-program/>

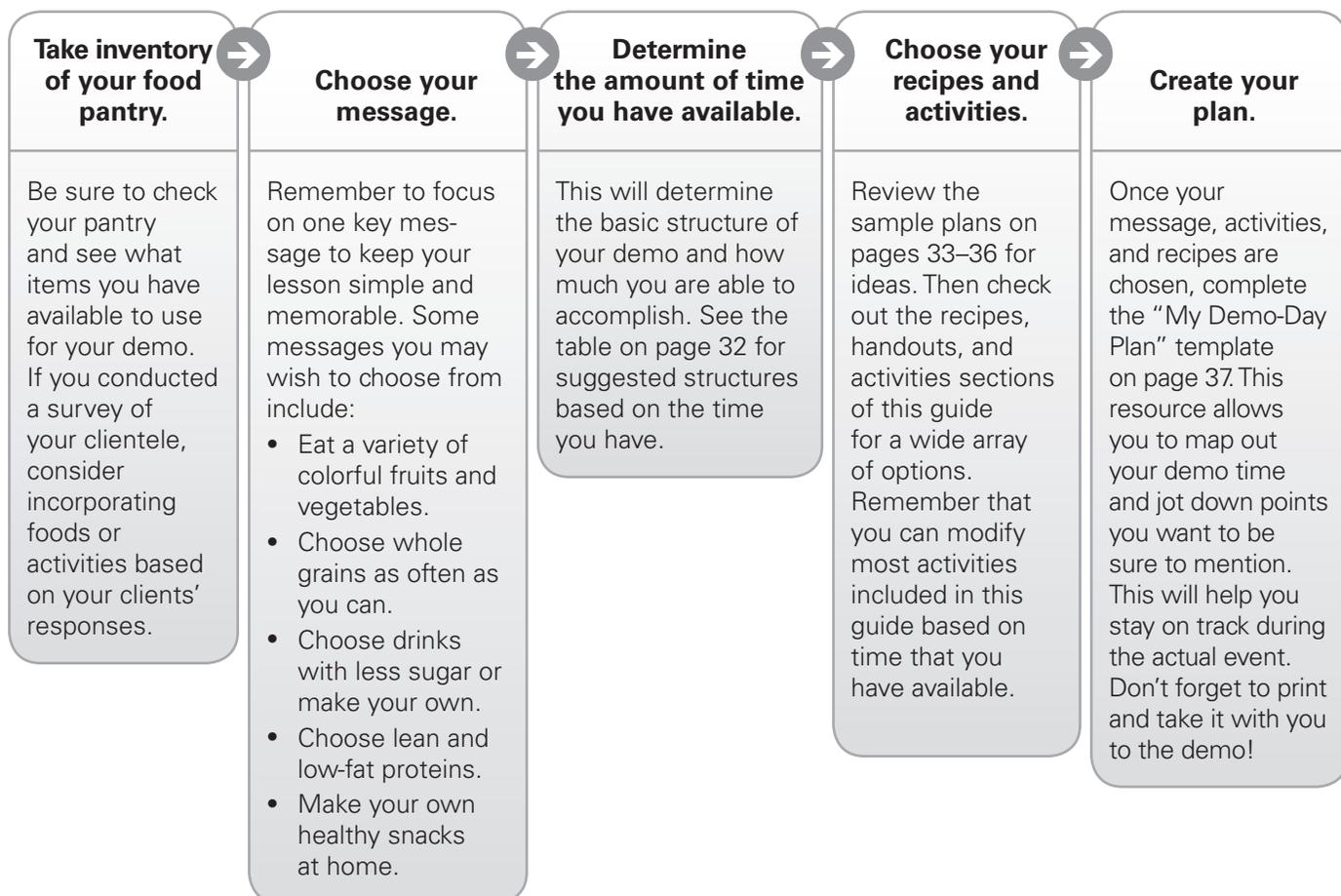
Locating Food Assistance

www.whyhunger.org/findfood
<http://211.org/>

IV. Leading Your Demonstration

We are pleased to provide you with a selection of Cooking Matters activities, handouts, and recipes used to teach a variety of audiences about healthy, low-cost eating and cooking. We hope that these materials, designed for and tested with the families in our six-week courses, may serve as useful tools for your demo.

As a reminder, we suggest that you determine what foods are available in your pantry, decide on a key message you want to convey to your audience during the demo, then choose the specific recipes, activities, and handouts that will help you reinforce this message based on the time you have available. See “Choosing Demonstration Recipes and/or Activities” on page 13 and check out our suggested process flow in the chart below. To assist you, we have created some sample demo-day plans that guide you through suggested talking points, activities, recipes, and handouts based on a particular message and amount of time available. Keep in mind that these suggestions are just the beginning. Choose your own combination of activities, handouts, and recipes based on another message of your liking (e.g., “eat from every food group every day” or “compare labels to make healthier choices”) and how much time you have for your demo. Be creative and remember to have fun!



Time Available	Less than 10 minutes	10–20 minutes	20–30 minutes	30–60 minutes (or more)
Use the structure below if:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients are passing through the pantry with little or no time to sit for a demo or lesson. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have a little more time to engage with clients (e.g., while they are waiting to do their pantry “shopping”). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have even more time to engage with clients (e.g., during a scheduled demo day or event). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have the most time to engage with clients (e.g., during a scheduled demo day or event).
Suggested structure:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In advance, prepare samples of a recipe that correspond to your nutrition message. • Pass out samples and a copy of the recipe to each client. • Point out that the ingredients (or some key ingredients) in the recipe are available today in the pantry. • As participants walk through the pantry, highlight your key nutrition message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a short nutrition lesson with one focused message. • If applicable, have visual aids to use as talking points and reinforce your message. • If time allows, demonstrate how to prepare the recipe in front of your audience. Otherwise, prepare samples in advance and distribute during or after your lesson. • Pass out the recipe and any applicable handouts that will serve as a reminder of your nutrition message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose an activity from the “Activity Bank” that can be done in the time you have available. • If time allows, demonstrate how to prepare the recipe in front of your audience. Or have them help you prepare it. Otherwise, prepare samples in advance and distribute during or after your lesson. • Have participants sign waivers if doing hands-on activities or food prep. • Pass out the recipe and any applicable handouts that will serve as a reminder of your nutrition message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose an activity from the “Activity Bank” that can be done in the time you have available. • Choose a recipe that you can demonstrate in front of the audience, or have them help prepare, in the time you have available. • Have participants sign waivers if doing hands-on activities or food prep. • Pass out the recipe and any applicable handouts that will serve as a reminder of your nutrition message.

Sample Demo Plan 1

Total time available: 5 minutes

Items in the pantry I want to highlight: Mixed fruit canned in juice, whole grain cereal.

Nutrition message I want to communicate: Make your own healthy snacks at home.

Items to have completed in advance: Prepare and sample out yogurt parfaits (page 104), draining canned fruit before using. Hang MyPlate poster.

Materials Needed Checklist:

- Ingredients for recipe
- Sample cups
- Gloves
- Spoons
- Napkins
- Copies of Yogurt Parfait (page 104)
- Copies of Snack Smart (page 66)
- MyPlate poster

Introductions (Time available: 0-1 min)

- Introduce yourself. Briefly explain that you will be preparing a healthy snack recipe using ingredients from the pantry today.
- Talking points:
 - *Today I'd like to talk to you about making healthy snacks at home with foods you have on hand.*
 - *Following this demo, I hope you will try the recipe at home and modify it according to your food preferences and what you have on hand.*

Nutrition Lesson (Time available: 1-2 min)

- Talking points:
 - *What do you typically snack on at home?*
 - *Many foods you normally have on hand and foods you'll find in this pantry can be used to make healthy snacks.*
 - *When you fix a snack, think about the food groups you're eating from. Try to get at least two food groups into your snack. In particular, snack time is a great time to add more fruits and veggies to your day.*
- Refer to the MyPlate poster and quickly review the five food groups.

Recipe Demo (Time available: 0-1 min)

- Pass out prepared samples.

Wrap Up (Time available: 0 -1 min)

- Ask participants to sample the food and share their impressions. If participants didn't enjoy the recipe, discuss options for modifying according to their preferences.
- Talking points:
 - *Make sure to take some canned fruit and cereal in the food pantry today so you can make parfaits at home.*
 - *Are there any questions?*
- Pass out the recipe and **Snack Smart handout** as they leave the demo.

Sample Demo Plan 2

Total time available: 15 minutes

Items in the pantry I want to highlight: whole wheat pasta.

Nutrition message I want to communicate: Choose whole grains as often as you can.

Items to have completed in advance: Prepare and set out pasta dish samples. Gather materials for “Putting Whole Grains to the Test” on page 47. Hang MyPlate poster.

Materials Needed Checklist:

- Ingredients for recipe
- Materials for activity
- Sample cups
- Gloves
- Spoons
- Napkins
- Copies of Step-by-Step Pasta Dinner (page 75)
- Copies of Be a Whole Grain Detective (page 54)
- MyPlate poster

Introductions (Time available: 0-1 min)

- Introduce yourself. Briefly explain that you have a delicious recipe for them to try today using ingredients from the pantry.
- Talking points:
 - *Today I'd like to talk to you about choosing whole grains as often as you can.*
 - *Following this demo, I hope you will try the recipe at home and modify it according to your food preferences and what you have on hand.*

Nutrition Lesson (Time available: 10 min)

- Refer to the MyPlate poster and quickly review the 5 food groups.
- Talking points:
 - *Have you heard of whole grains before? What are they? Can you share some examples?*
- Lead clients in the **Putting Whole Grains to the Test activity** on page 47, allowing just 5 minutes for the breads to soak.

Recipe Demo (Time available: 0-1 min)

- Pass out prepared samples of a pasta dish made using the **Step-by-Step Pasta Dinner recipe framework**.

Wrap Up (Time available: 2-3 min)

- Ask participants to sample the food and share their impressions. If participants didn't enjoy the recipe, discuss options for modifying according to their preferences.
- Talking points:
 - *Whole grains are great for your health — they can lower your risk of some diseases and help you maintain a healthy weight. They can also keep you full longer. Try using whole grains in place of refined grains as often as you can.*
 - *Make sure to take some whole wheat pasta in the food pantry today so you can try the recipe at home.*
 - *Are there any questions?*
- Pass out the recipe and the **Be a Whole Grain Detective handout** as they leave the demo.

Sample Demo Plan 3

Total time available: 25 minutes

Items in the pantry I want to highlight: low-fat milk, 100% fruit juice.

Nutrition message I want to communicate: Choose drinks with less sugar or make your own.

Items to have completed in advance: Gather ingredients and materials for the **Healthy Drinks Taste Test** activity on page 43 and the **Sugar Overload** activity on page 49.

Materials Needed Checklist:

- Ingredients and materials for activities
- Copies of Fruit Smoothie recipe (page 85)
- Copies of Drink Smart (page 58)
- Copies of Drink to Your Health (page 59)

Introductions (Time available: 1-2 min)

- Introduce yourself and your volunteers. Explain that you have a fun activity for them today and some tasty drinks to make and taste together, using ingredients from the pantry.
- Talking points:
 - *Today I'd like to talk to you about choosing drinks with less sugar — or making your own!*
 - *Following this demo, I hope you will feel confident that you can make low-sugar beverage choices or make your own if you want.*

Nutrition Lesson (Time available: 10 min)

- Talking points:
 - *What do you normally have to drink when you're thirsty? What do you drink with meals and snacks?*
- Lead clients in the **Sugar Overload** activity.
- Refer to the **Drink to Your Health handout**. Discuss why it's better to drink mostly water and low-fat milk, smaller amounts of 100% juice, and very few sodas or other sugary drinks.
- Let participants know we can create our own tasty beverages that have much less sugar and are good for our bodies.

Recipe Demo (Time available: 10 min)

- Lead participants in the **Healthy Drinks Taste Test** activity, allowing them to prepare and sample different healthy beverages.

Wrap Up (Time available: 2-3 min)

- As participants sample the beverages, ask them to share their impressions. If participants didn't enjoy a beverage, discuss options for modifying according to their preferences.
- Talking points:
 - *There are lots of flavorful drink options that won't load you up on added sugars. As you've just seen, they're easy to make too!*
 - *Remember that tap water is free, contains no calories, and helps you replace fluids you lose throughout the day.*
 - *Make sure to take some low-fat milk and 100% juice in the food pantry today so you can try making these drinks yourself at home.*
 - *Are there any questions?*
- Pass out the **Fruit Smoothies recipe**, the **Drink Smart handout**, and the **Drink to Your Health handout** as they leave the demo.

Sample Demo Plan 4

Total time available: 45 minutes

Items in the pantry I want to highlight: black beans.

Nutrition message I want to communicate: Choose lean proteins.

Items to have completed in advance: Gather ingredients for Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas on page 84. Gather materials for the **Blubber Burger activity** on page 40. Hang MyPlate poster.

Materials Needed Checklist:

- Ingredients for recipe
- Materials for activity
- Sample cups
- Gloves
- Spoons
- Napkins
- Copies of Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas (page 84)
- Copies of Know Your Fats (page 62)
- MyPlate poster

Introductions (Time available: 2-3 min)

- Introduce yourself. Explain that you have a fun cooking activity for them today.
- Let them know that you will invite them up to help you with the cooking later in the demo.
- Have everyone complete waivers.

Nutrition Lesson (Time available: 15 min)

- Refer to the MyPlate poster and quickly review the five food groups.
- Talking points:
 - *What types of foods are in the protein group? What do these foods have in common?*
 - *Foods in this group have higher amounts of protein. Many, but not all, of these foods come from animals. Animal protein is typically higher in fat. When choosing foods in this group, it's important to choose lean options as often as possible.*
- Highlight lean protein choices, such as beans, poultry with skin removed, fish, meat from the loin or round, and tofu.
- Transition discussion to choosing lower-fat options when eating out. Lead participants in the **Blubber Burger activity**.
- Reinforce the benefits of cooking food at home ourselves. We can save money and have control over the ingredients — allowing us to make it healthier and to our particular tastes.

Recipe Demo (Time available: 20 min)

- Explain the importance of hand washing and demonstrate how to properly wash hands. Have all participants who will help with the demo wash their hands.
- Review knife safety.
- Invite participants up to help you prepare the **Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas recipe**. Explain that the recipe includes beans, a lean protein source. Point out that rinsing beans before using can get rid of up to 40% of the sodium.

Wrap Up (Time available: 6-7 min)

- Ask participants to sample the food and share their impressions. If participants didn't enjoy the recipe, discuss options for modifying according to their preferences.
- Talking points:
 - *Try using lean proteins as often as you can. Using inexpensive proteins like beans, peas, eggs, or canned seafood in place of meats and poultry several times a week is also a good way to save your money.*
 - *Make sure to take some beans in the food pantry today so you can try the recipe at home.*
 - *Are there any questions? Will you use any of the information you learned today? How?*
- Pass out the recipe and the **Know Your Fats handout** as they leave the demo.

My Demo-Day Plan

Total time available: _____ minutes

Items in the pantry I want to highlight: _____.

Nutrition message I want to communicate: _____.

Items to have completed in advance: _____.

Introductions (Start time: _____)

- Introduce _____.
- If the group is small, have participants introduce themselves and share their favorite food.
- Explain the message or theme of your demo. The theme of this demo is: _____.
- Following this demo, I hope you will: _____.
- Some courtesies I'd like to ask for during this demo include: _____.
- Fill out waiver, if using.

Nutrition Lesson (Start time: _____)

- Question(s) I would like to ask the group: _____.
- Talking points I'd like to make: _____.

First Activity (Start time: _____): _____.

Second Activity (Start time: _____): _____.

Hand Washing, Using a Sink or Antibacterial Wipes/Gel (Start time: _____).

Recipe Demo (Start time: _____)

- Name of recipe(s): _____.

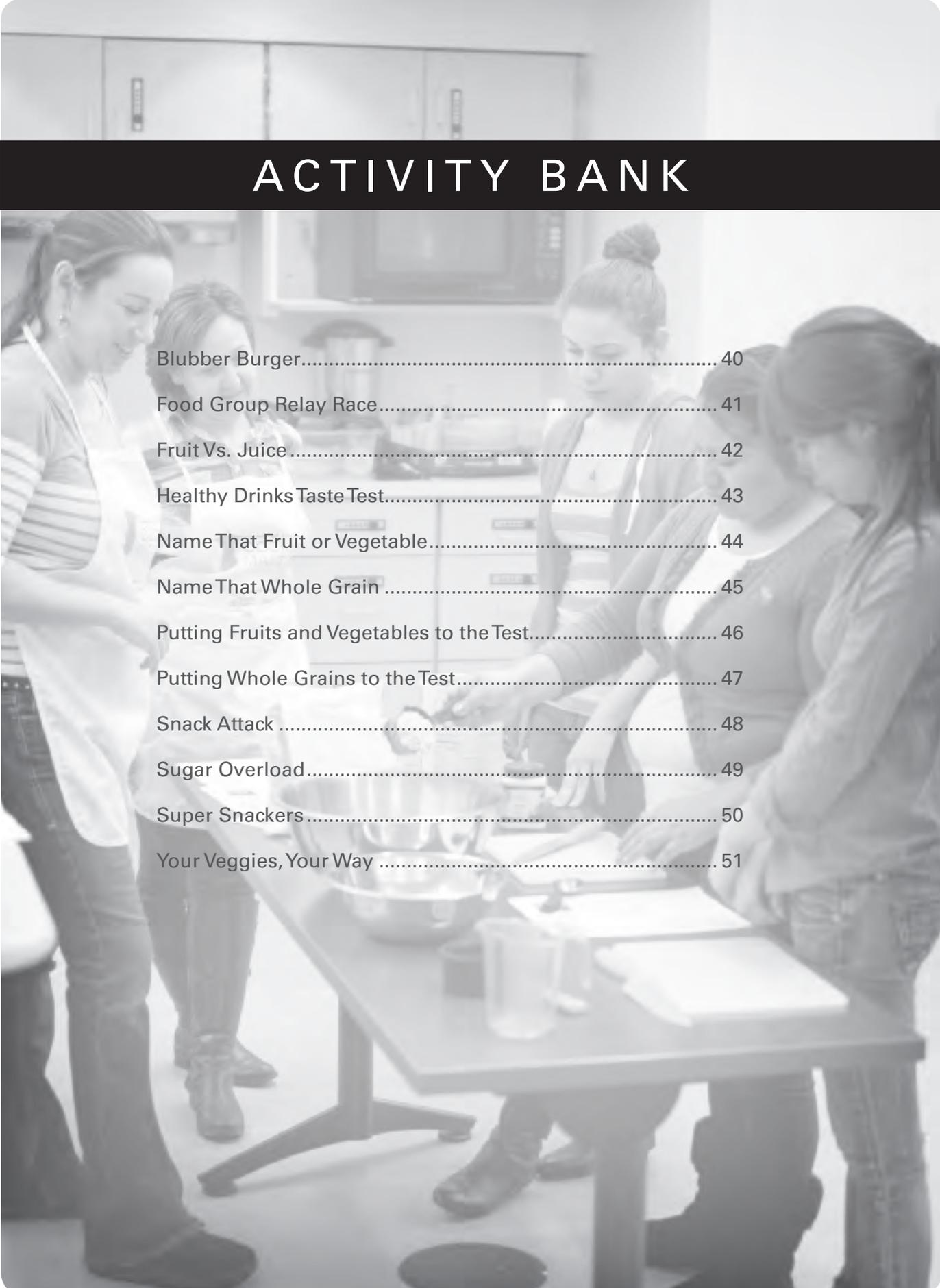
Wrap Up (Start time: _____)

- Have participants sample the food and share their impressions. If participants didn't enjoy the recipe, discuss options for modifying according to their preferences.
- Reinforce main messages with participants _____.
- Be sure to take _____ ingredient(s) in the food pantry today.
- Are there any questions?
- Pass out recipe(s) and handouts as participants leave the demo.

Materials Needed Checklist:

- Ingredients for recipe
- Materials for activity
- Sample cups
- Gloves
- Spoons
- Napkins
- Copies of _____ recipe
- Copies of _____ handout
- MyPlate poster
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

ACTIVITY BANK



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Blubber Burger

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Suggested Audiences:

Kids, Teens, Adults, and Families

Materials:

- Several pieces of poster board
- Marker
- Printed fast-food menus and nutrition facts
- Hamburger buns
- Small bowl of shortening
- Teaspoon-size measure
- Plastic knives for spreading
- Disposable gloves
- Calculator

Handouts:

- Menu Mania, page 64

TIPS:

- Download and print the nutrition facts for one or more fast-food restaurant menus from the company websites.
- Make copies of the Menu Mania handout to pass out during this activity.
- Follow this activity with a demo of a recipe that can be made at home instead of getting fast food. Try Turkey Tacos, Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas, or Homemade Corn Tortilla Chips with Mango Salsa.
- If time permits, prove the point that fast foods can be made at home for less money. Use the cost of a 5- or 10-pound bag of baking potatoes in your area to find the cost per ounce of potatoes. Determine the cost of 8 ounces of potatoes. Add about 12 cents to this number to account for the cost of olive oil and salt. This is the total cost for a serving of your own homemade French fries. Compare this cost to a medium bag of French fries at a local fast-food restaurant.

In Advance

1. On a piece of poster board, write a sample meal and the grams of fat:
Whopper with cheese: 44 grams of fat
Medium French fries: 20 grams of fat
Medium chocolate shake: 18 grams of fat
Total fat: 82 grams

2. Below that, write:

$\text{Grams of fat} \div 4 = \text{teaspoons of shortening}$

Example: $82 \text{ grams of fat} \div 4 = 20.5 \text{ teaspoons of shortening}$

3. Display the poster board at your demo table where participants can see it.

With Participants

1. Pass out fast-food menus to several participants. Ask for volunteers to call out a meal they would eat in one sitting. Write their suggested meals on separate sheets of poster board.
2. Have participants use the printed nutrition facts to call out the grams of fat for each component of the proposed meals. Write these numbers on the poster board. Add up the total grams of fat for each chosen meal, using the calculator as needed.
3. Ask a few participants to volunteer to spread the calculated amount of shortening onto a bun for each meal. When they are finished, participants will have created several “blubber burgers,” each representing the fat content of various sample meals. Hold them up so all participants can see them.
4. Ask participants to compare the results. Point out how quickly fat can add up in their favorite fast-food meals.
5. Have participants review the menus and locate alternatives to the selected meals with less fat and healthier ingredients. **Ask:** How can you make smarter choices when you’re out to eat? Prompt participants to think about choosing meals with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-sugar beverages, and lean proteins. Provide suggestions as needed.
6. Ask participants to consider the reasons why they purchase fast foods. Acknowledge their reasons but encourage them to consider the tradeoffs:
 - **Taste:** Healthier, tasty versions of fast-food favorites can be made at home. If you plan to demo some of these recipes today, point out that they will taste samples soon.
 - **Time:** Point out that in the time it takes participants to walk or drive to a fast-food restaurant, wait in line, order, and get their food, they could prepare many great meals and snacks.
 - **Cost:** Point out that many fast foods or other convenience foods can actually be made at home for less money.

Food Group Relay Race

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Suggested Audiences:

Kids and Teens

Materials:

- 2 paper bags
- Marker
- Food pictures or food models, at least 12 per food group
- MyPlate poster, optional

Handouts:

- MyPlate, page 65

In Advance

1. Divide food pictures into two piles. Make sure there is a roughly even distribution of foods from each food group, and of “everyday” and “sometimes” foods. “Everyday” foods are foods that are OK to eat every day. “Sometimes” foods are foods that are OK to eat every once in a while.
2. Label one paper bag “everyday” and the other “sometimes” foods.
3. If using a MyPlate poster, display where participants can see it.

With Participants

1. Ask participants to name the five MyPlate food groups. Have them call out examples of foods from each food group. **Ask:** Do you think all foods within each food group are OK to eat every day? Give an example, like a piece of cake in the Grains group. Have participants give examples of “sometimes” foods versus “everyday” foods in each food group (e.g., apple pie versus apples in the Fruits group, a hamburger versus black beans in the Protein group).
2. Divide participants into two groups. Give each group a pile of food pictures.
3. Tell participants they will have two minutes to sort their pile of pictures into the five food groups. When you call time, review each group’s placements. Gently correct as needed.
4. Place the two bags at one end of the room. Have teams line up at the other end. Ask each team to bring only their Grains group food pictures with them.
5. Explain that when you say “go,” each team will look through the pictures and decide which bag each food should be in: “everyday” or “sometimes.” The first person in line will run up and place one food picture in the correct bag, run back, and slap the next team member’s hand. Then, the next person runs up to place the next food picture, and so on. Each team will repeat this process until all of their Grains group food pictures have been placed. The first team to finish and sit down is the winning team.
6. Review where foods were placed. Gently correct as needed. Ask if participants are surprised by the results.
7. Repeat with pictures from each food group as time permits.

TIPS:

- If your group is large, have picture cards pre-sorted into food groups. Skip step 3. Form even numbers of teams according to the amount of participants you have. Let the first two teams race against each other using only Grain group pictures. Let the next two teams race using only Fruit group pictures, and so on until all teams have had a turn.
- Make copies of the MyPlate handout to pass out during this activity.

Fruit Vs. Juice

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Suggested Audiences:
Kids and Families

Materials:

- 1 orange for every three kids or families
- Napkins
- Small paper cups
- A whole orange, a whole apple, and some grapes
- 1 (6- to 8-ounce) clear cup
- 6 ounces of orange juice

In Advance

1. Cut oranges into six segments. Remove seeds.
2. Fill the clear glass with six ounces of orange juice.

With Participants

1. Place the whole fruits where participants can see them.
2. Hold up the glass of orange juice. Ask kids to identify what is in the glass and which fruit on the table this juice comes from.
3. Give one orange segment, napkin, and paper cup to each participant. Have everyone taste the orange together.
4. After eating the orange segment, give each participant another segment. Ask them to squeeze the juice out into the small cup.
5. Point out how much juice comes out of each segment compared to the juice in the glass. Ask kids to guess how many oranges it would take to fill up the glass. **Ask:** Could you eat this many? Why or why not?
6. Explain that the fiber in whole fruit makes you feel fuller than drinking juice. Compare fiber to a broom — it sweeps through your body and cleans out the “bad stuff.” Point out that while fruit and juice contain important nutrients that help us grow strong, the whole fruit is the better choice because it gives us the fiber we need and has fewer calories than juice.
7. Point out the other whole fruits on display. Ask kids what kind of juice they make. Reinforce that, just like oranges, these fruits contain more fiber in their whole form than in juice form.

TIPS:

- If your group is large, skip steps 3 and 4. Instead, have just a few kids come to the front to squeeze the juice from one segment into cups.
- Point out that a good rule of thumb is to drink no more than six to eight ounces of 100% juice per day. Remind participants that six ounces is the amount in the clear cup.
- Show participants how to check the label to be sure they are buying only 100% juice.
- Show participants how to add fizz and cut calories. Make the Raspberry-Lime Fizz (page 95) as part of your demo.

Healthy Drinks Taste Test

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Suggested Audiences:
Kids, Teens, Adults, and Families

Materials:

- Small disposable cups
- Materials and ingredients for preparing beverages chosen from the table to the right

Handouts:

- Drink Smart, page 58

TIPS:

- Make copies of the Drink Smart handout and the Fruit Smoothies recipe to pass out during this activity.
- If time permits, have each group practice making the drink at each station, rather than just sample the drinks the other groups have already prepared.

In Advance

1. Set up stations around the demo area for participants to make and taste a variety of healthy drinks, using ideas in the table below.
2. Make sure each station has the appropriate equipment to create and serve the drink for that station.

Beverage	Ingredients	How to Prepare
Fruit smoothies	See the Fruit Smoothies recipe (page 85).	See the Fruit Smoothies recipe (page 85).
Flavored water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lemons, limes, oranges, and cucumbers • Fresh mint leaves, rosemary, or other fresh herbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rinse and slice fresh lemons, limes, oranges, and cucumbers. • Snip mint leaves, rosemary, or other fresh herbs. • Fill several pitchers with ice water and add any combination of ingredients to each pitcher.
Fruit-juice sodas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seltzer • Variety of 100% juices • Lime • Optional: Lemon, lime, or orange slices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill a large pitcher, ½ juice and ½ seltzer water. • Rinse the lime and cut in half. Squeeze the juice from each half into the pitcher. • Mix well and add ice before serving. Add fruit slices, if using.

With Participants

1. Explain how each drink is prepared. Divide participants into groups. Assign groups to a starting station.
2. Have each group work on preparing the drink at their station, making enough for the entire audience to sample. When they are finished, invite them to move to the next station and taste the healthy drink another group has made. Repeat until participants have visited each station.
3. When everyone is finished sampling, engage participants in discussion. **Ask:** Which healthy drinks did you enjoy the most? Why? Which would you like to make at home?
4. Point out that healthy habits start with small changes. Encourage participants to start by choosing water, low-fat milk, or a homemade healthy drink instead of a sugary drink once a day or even once a week.

Name That Fruit or Vegetable

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Suggested Audiences:

Kids, Teen, Adults, and Families

Materials:

- 4–6 colorful fruits and vegetables that may look or taste unfamiliar to participants
- Dips or spreads (see instructions)
- Bowls for any dips
- Serving spoons
- Plates, one for each participant

Handouts:

- Delicious Dips and Spreads, page 57

In Advance

1. Purchase 4–6 fruits and vegetables that may look or taste unfamiliar to participants (e.g., mango, apricot, squashes, eggplant). Choose fruits and vegetables of many different colors.
2. Cut each food into bite-size pieces. Place a small amount onto a plate for each participant. Preserve at least one whole form of each fruit or vegetable so that participants can see what it looks like.
3. Choose and prepare any dips or spreads from the **Delicious Dips & Spreads handout** to offer with the food samples. Set out dips in bowls. Place a serving spoon in each bowl.

With Participants

1. Ask participants to call out some of their favorite fruits and vegetables. Have them share how they like to eat them (e.g., raw, roasted, with dip, on a salad).
2. Pass out one plate to each participant. Ask them not to try the samples yet.
3. Point out one of the samples. Ask participants to match it to the whole form at the front of the room and guess its name. When they have correctly identified the food, pass the whole form around and ask participants to describe what they notice about it (e.g., color, shape, feel). Invite participants to taste their sample and comment on its texture or taste.
4. Repeat this process for each of the foods.
5. Ask participants to share which fruits and vegetables they enjoyed the most and why. Have them point out which ones were new for them. Explain that sometimes you need to try new foods more than once to get used to the taste and decide if you like it. Also, people's tastes change over time, so next year you might like a food that you didn't like today.

TIPS:

- To keep the activity on schedule, stick to introducing just 4–6 foods. If you have less time, choose fewer foods.
- Consider teaching participants how to roast or lightly steam veggies like eggplant that may taste bitter when eaten raw. Show participants how to lightly season and prepare them. Conduct the tasting with the fruits first while the veggies cook.
- Encourage participants to try the foods without the dips first to determine the foods' true taste.
- Remind participants that it's ok to not like a food — everyone has different taste preferences. Ask them to please keep any negative comments to themselves so that others can feel free to enjoy it.
- If using homemade dips, pass out copies of the Delicious Dips & Spreads handout for participants to take home.

Name That Whole Grain

Estimated Time:

15 minutes

Suggested

Audiences:

Kids, Teens, Adults,
and Families

Materials:

- 4–6 whole grain foods
- Dips or spreads (see instructions)
- Bowls for any dips
- Serving spoons
- Plates, one for each participant

Handouts:

- Delicious Dips and Spreads, page 57
- Be a Whole Grain Detective, page 54

In Advance

1. Purchase 4–6 whole grain foods. Look for whole grain alternatives to popular refined grain foods (e.g., cereals, crackers, snack bars), as well as a few items that may be unfamiliar to participants (e.g., whole wheat pita pockets).
2. Cut each food into bite-size pieces. Place a small amount of each food on a plate for each participant.
3. Display the whole form and packaging of each food at the front of the room.
4. Choose and prepare any dips or spreads from the **Delicious Dips & Spreads handout** that you will offer with the food samples. Set out dips in bowls. Place serving spoons in each bowl.

With Participants

1. **Ask:** What have you heard about whole grains? Have you tried any whole grain foods? Do you eat any whole grains regularly? Which ones?
2. Pass out one plate to each participant. Ask them not to try the samples yet.
3. Point out one of the samples. Ask participants to match it to the whole form or packaging at the front of the room. When they have correctly identified the food, invite them to try the sample and talk about what they notice (e.g., the texture, color, or taste).
4. Repeat this process for each of the foods.
5. Ask participants to share why they liked certain samples more than others. Have them point out which ones were new for them. Explain that sometimes you need to try new foods more than once to get used to the taste and decide if you like it. Also, people's tastes change over time, so next year you might like a food that you didn't like today.
6. Ask participants if they know what the difference is between a whole grain and a refined grain. Add to the discussion as needed. Point out that when whole grains go through the refinement process, many of their important nutrients, such as fiber, are removed. For this reason, it's important to choose whole grains as often as you can.

TIPS:

- To keep the activity on schedule, stick to introducing just 4–6 foods. If you have less time, choose fewer foods.
- If you are able to prepare them in advance, offer some less familiar whole grains such as quinoa or whole grain couscous.
- Follow up the tasting by demoing a recipe made with whole grains. During the demo, talk about how to identify whole grain foods. Pass out copies of the Be a Whole Grain Detective handout for participants to take home.
- Encourage participants to try the foods without the dips first to determine the foods' true taste.
- Remind participants that it's ok to not like a food — everyone has different taste preferences. Ask them to please keep any negative comments to themselves so that others can feel free to enjoy it.
- If using homemade dips, pass out copies of the Delicious Dips & Spreads handout for participants to take home.

Putting Fruits and Vegetables to the Test

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Suggested Audiences: Adults

Materials:

- Flip-chart paper or poster board
- Markers

Handouts:

- Fresh, Frozen, and Canned, page 60

TIPS:

- Make copies of the Fresh, Frozen, and Canned handout to pass out after the activity is over.
- Follow this activity by demoing a recipe using two or more forms of fruits or veggies. Point out why you chose these forms for the fruits and veggies you're using.

In Advance

1. Label the flip-chart paper or poster board with three rows ("Fresh," "Frozen," and "Canned") and two columns ("Pros" and "Cons"), as shown in the table below.

With Participants

1. **Ask:** Which form of fruits and vegetables do you prefer (fresh, frozen, or canned)? Why?
2. Starting with fresh produce, ask participants to call out the benefits of fresh produce. Record responses in the correct column. Next, ask participants to call out any cons of fresh produce. If participants get stuck, suggest that they consider factors such as cost, storage, color, taste, texture, nutrient content, and ease of preparation. Use the table below to suggest any pros or cons that are not brought up by participants.
3. Repeat this process for canned and frozen produce.
4. **Ask:** Does this activity help you think differently about which form of produce you prefer? If so, how? Point out that there is not a "best" form. Each has its pros and cons. Your choices may be influenced by your needs for a particular recipe, what's in season, availability in your store, the time you have available to cook, etc.

	Pros	Cons
Fresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater variety • Able to touch, smell, and see before buying • Can cost less when purchased in season • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be used quickly before going bad • Need to learn about ripeness and storage • Can be expensive if not in season • • •
Frozen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen at peak freshness • Can cost less compared to out-of-season produce • Long shelf life (up to six months) • Little preparation required • Available year-round • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have added sodium, sugar, and/or fat • Texture changes with freezing • • • •
Canned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned at peak freshness • Can cost less compared to out-of-season produce • Long shelf life (two to four years) • Little preparation required • Available year-round • • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have added sodium, sugar, and/or fat • Texture changes with canning • • • •

Putting Whole Grains to the Test

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Suggested Audiences:
Kids, Teens, Adults, and Families

Materials:

- 1 slice of 100% whole wheat bread
- 1 slice of white bread
- 2 clear bowls
- 2 cups of orange juice
- Tongs
- Samples of different whole grain foods OR empty packages of different grain foods

Handouts:

- Be a Whole Grain Detective, page 54

With Participants

1. Tell participants they are going to conduct a simple demonstration to see how whole grains and refined grains behave differently in our bodies.
2. Ask a participant to place the slice of white bread in one bowl and the slice of whole wheat bread in the other. Have another participant pour orange juice into each bowl, enough to just cover each slice of bread. Point out that the orange juice represents the acid in our stomachs when we digest food.
3. Let the bread soak for 10 minutes. During this time, allow participants to try samples of different whole grain foods. Ask them to comment on the taste and texture of each one (see the **Name That Whole Grain activity** on page 45 for more detailed instructions). Or, review how to identify whole grain foods when participants go to the store (see Nutrition Basics for Demo Leaders on page 27). Pass out empty packages of different grain foods. Have participants use what they just learned to determine whether each food is a refined grain or a whole grain.
4. After 10 minutes have passed, ask a participant to pick up the slice of white bread with the tongs, then the slice of whole wheat bread. **Ask:** What do you notice? Why does the white bread fall apart while the whole wheat bread does not?
5. Explain that whole grains take longer to break down in our bodies. This helps us feel full and helps prevent overeating. Point out additional benefits of whole grains. For example, when whole grains go through the refinement process, many of their important nutrients, such as fiber, are removed. Compare fiber to a broom that sweeps through the body, removing the “bad stuff.”

TIP:

- Follow this activity by demoing a recipe made with whole grains. If you did not already do so during this activity, talk about how to identify whole grain foods. Pass out copies of the Be a Whole Grain Detective handout for participants to take home.

Snack Attack

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Suggested Audiences:
Teens and Adults

Materials:

- A variety of empty snack food packages
- Ingredients and equipment to prepare a selection of healthy snacks

Handouts:

- Snack Smart, pages 66–67
- Delicious Dips & Spreads, page 57
- Label Lingo, page 63

TIPS:

- Use empty snack packaging to avoid having participants ask if they can eat the snacks when the activity is done.
- Be sure you have enough assistants on hand. Determine in advance who will be placed at each station. If stations are not possible, choose 2-3 snacks for the entire group to prepare together.
- Make copies of the Snack Smart handout and the Delicious Dips & Spreads handout for participants to take home.
- If time permits, have each group practice making the snack at each station, rather than just sample the snacks the other groups have already prepared.

In Advance

1. Collect a variety of empty packaging for popular snack foods (e.g., potato chips, cheese straws, cookies, candy).
2. Choose a selection of no-cook or low-prep snacks from the **Snack Smart handout**, the **Delicious Dips & Spreads handout**, or the Recipes section of this guide. If you can, choose snack recipes that provide a comparable but healthy alternative to some of the packaged snacks (e.g., Fruit and Cheese Kabobs as an alternative to cheese straws or cheesy crackers).
3. Gather needed ingredients and equipment.
4. Set up stations around the demo area, with a different snack recipe to be prepared at each station. Place ingredients and equipment needed for the recipe being made at each station.
5. Make copies of the **Label Lingo handout**. Or, prepare a large piece of poster board with an enlarged version of the handout.

With Participants

1. Ask participants what they typically choose for a snack. Display empty packages of commonly consumed snack foods.
2. Divide participants into groups. Assign each group a snack food package. Pass out copies of the **Label Lingo handout**. Or, display the poster board with the enlarged handout where participants can see it.
3. Clarify the difference between one serving and the number of servings provided in a package. Ask groups to compare the serving size listed on their package with the amount they would typically eat. Next, ask them to determine how much fat, sugar, or sodium would be in their typical portion. Finally, ask groups to check the ingredient list and determine whether their snack includes any whole grains, fruits, or vegetables. Note that ingredients are listed in order of amount (e.g., the further down the list, the less there is of that ingredient).
4. Point out that packaged snacks are typically high in fat and other less desirable nutrients. They usually contain very few fruits, vegetables, or whole grains. Explain that a balanced snack includes foods from at least two food groups. Snacks are a great time to add more fruits and vegetables to your day.
5. Explain how the snacks at each station will be prepared. Assign each group to a starting station. Ask them to make enough snacks for participants in the other groups to sample as well.
6. When groups are finished, have them rotate to the next station and try the snack made by the previous group. Let them rotate through all stations until they have sampled all the snacks. When they are finished, ask questions like: Which snacks were your favorites? Why? Would you make these snacks at home yourself? Why or why not? Encourage participants to try preparing at least one healthy snack at home this week.

Sugar Overload

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Suggested Audiences:
Kids, Teens, Adults, and Families

Materials:

- Empty cans or bottles of a variety of popular sugary drinks
- Clear plastic cups, one for each empty can or bottle
- Bag of sugar
- Teaspoon
- Calculator
- Flip-chart paper or poster board

Handouts:

- Label Lingo, page 63
- Drink Smart, page 58

TIPS:

- Be prepared to help participants with the math to move things along. It's a good idea to have the correct amounts calculated in advance. If time is running short, do just one calculation with the group. Then, have participants measure out the amount of sugar that has already been calculated for their drinks. This is particularly helpful when working with younger kids.
- Follow this activity with the Healthy Drinks Taste Test on page 43. Or, prepare the Raspberry-Lime Fizz (page 95) as part of your demo.
- Make copies of the handouts for participants to take home with them.

In Advance

1. Collect a variety of empty containers for popular sugary drinks (e.g., sodas, fruit-flavored drinks, sweet tea, vitamin water, chocolate milk, sports drinks).

2. Set out the empty bottles for the drinks.

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Grams of sugar} \\ \text{in one serving} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{r} \text{Number} \\ \text{of servings} \end{array} = \begin{array}{r} \text{Grams of sugar} \\ \text{in total package} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Grams of sugar} \\ \text{in total package} \end{array} \div 4 = \begin{array}{r} \text{Teaspoons of sugar} \end{array}$$

3. Write the following on a piece of flip-chart paper or poster board:
4. Make copies of the **Label Lingo handout**. Or, prepare a large piece of poster board with an enlarged version of the handout.

With Participants

1. **Ask:** What do you normally drink when you're thirsty? What do you drink with meals and snacks? Show participants the empty bottles of commonly consumed drinks. **Ask:** How would you decide which of these drinks is healthier? Explain that many popular drink choices are loaded with sugar. We can use labels to find out which choices have less sugar.
2. Pass out copies of the **Label Lingo handout**. Or, display the enlarged version of the handout where participants can see it. Clarify the difference between one serving and the number of servings provided in a package. Show participants how to calculate the amount of sugar in an entire package.
3. Ask for volunteers to come to the front. Assign each volunteer one of the empty bottle containers, if possible, based on what they say they drink most often. Ask participants to read to the audience from the Nutrition Facts panel the amount of sugar in one serving of their beverage.
4. Have participants use the serving size information to figure out the grams of sugar in the entire container. Use the calculator to determine the equivalent teaspoons of sugar.
5. Ask participants to scoop the teaspoons of sugar calculated for their drinks into an empty plastic cup. Have them place the cup in front of the corresponding empty beverage container.
6. After each volunteer has measured the amount of sugar in their drink, compare the results and discuss impressions. Explain that many popular beverages are very high in sugar and take the place of other drinks that are good for our bodies. Point out the drinks with sugar that provide important nutrients (e.g., chocolate milk, orange juice), but encourage participants to get these nutrients from sources with less added sugar or more fiber (e.g., plain low-fat milk, whole fruit).

Super Snackers

Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Suggested Audiences:

Kids, Teens, Adults, and Families

Materials:

- Ingredients and equipment to prepare a selection of healthy snacks
- MyPlate poster, optional

Handouts:

- Snack Smart, pages 66–67
- Delicious Dips & Spreads, page 57
- Super Snackers, page 68

TIPS:

- If you do not have a MyPlate poster displayed, you may need to do a quick review of the food groups with participants before you begin this activity.
- Depending on the time you have available and the level of your group, ask participants to comment on why the ingredients in each recipe or on the Super Snackers handout are smart choices. Point out the use of healthier ingredients like low-fat cheese or yogurt, whole grain crackers, and fruits and vegetables.

In Advance

1. Choose a selection of no-cook or low-prep snacks from the **Snack Smart handout**, the **Delicious Dips & Spreads handout**, or the Recipes section of this guide. Choose snacks that include foods from at least two food groups.
2. Secure needed ingredients and equipment.
3. Set up stations around the demo area, with a different snack recipe to be prepared at each station. Place ingredients and equipment needed for the recipe being made at each station.
4. If using a MyPlate poster, display where participants can see it.
5. Make copies of the **Super Snackers handout**.

With Participants

1. Ask participants what they typically choose for a snack. Have them identify the food groups included in the snacks they named. If using the MyPlate poster, refer to it as needed.
2. Explain that a balanced snack includes foods from at least two food groups. Divide participants into groups. Pass out a copy of the **Super Snackers handout** to each group. Ask groups to come up with at least three balanced snacks they could create using the ideas on the handout or by suggesting their own ideas.
3. Give groups two to three minutes to work together. Next, call on each group to report the tastiest snack idea they came up with. Congratulate participants on their ideas. Explain that today they are going to practice making their own balanced, healthy snacks.
4. Explain how the snacks at each station will be prepared. Assign groups to a starting station. Ask them to make enough snacks for each participant to sample.
5. When participants are finished, have them rotate to the next station and try the snack made by the previous group. Let them rotate through all stations until they have sampled all the snacks. When the activity is finished, ask questions like: Which snacks were your favorites? Why? Which would you like to make at home? Encourage participants to try making balanced, healthy snacks at home.

TIPS:

- Be sure you have enough assistants on hand. Determine in advance who will be placed at each station. If stations are not possible, choose two to three snacks for the entire group to prepare together.
- Make copies of the Snack Smart handout and the Delicious Dips & Spreads handout for participants to take home.
- If time permits, have each group practice making the snack at each station, rather than just sample the snacks the other groups have already prepared.

Your Veggies, Your Way

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Suggested Audiences:

Kids and Families

Materials:

- Large pot
- Mixing spoon
- Vegetable peeler
- Sharp knife
- Colander
- 5 small bowls
- 5 index cards
- Stickers
- Plates, napkins, and forks, one for each participant
- 2 medium carrots per participant
- Fresh herbs of 5 different types (e.g., basil, cilantro, mint, rosemary, parsley, etc.)
- Canola oil
- Salt

In Advance

1. Bring a pot of water to boil. Rinse, peel, and slice carrots.
2. On each of the five index cards, write the name of one of the five herbs you chose for this activity.
3. When the water is boiling, add carrot slices to the pot. Cook to desired tenderness.
4. Drain and add a small amount of canola oil and a dash of salt to the pot. Stir well to coat all the carrots.

With Participants

1. Pass out sprigs of the fresh herbs. Have participants pluck and chop the leaves. Instruct them to place each chopped herb in a separate bowl.
2. In front of each bowl, place the index card with the name of the herb in that bowl.
3. Distribute the carrots among the herb bowls, reserving just enough carrots for participants to have another taste of their favorites at the end. Stir the carrots so they are coated evenly with the herbs.
4. Place a small amount of each variation of the seasoned carrots on plates and distribute to participants. Invite them to taste each flavor. Ask them to indicate their preferred flavor by placing a sticker on the index card in front of the herb they liked best.
5. Provide everyone with another taste of the “most popular” flavors. Suggest other veggies that they could flavor at home in the same way, such as zucchini, squash, corn, or sweet potatoes. Encourage participants to experiment with trying new flavors at home.

TIPS:

- Other veggies such as broccoli, zucchini, corn, lima and other beans, or tomatoes can work well with this activity too.
- Use 1 Tablespoon of minced fresh herbs for every 2 cups of carrots. If using dried herbs, use only 1 teaspoon for every 2 cups of carrots. Dried herbs should be added directly to the pot with oil and salt to soften before serving.
- If holding this activity with kids, assist them as needed. Have them tear instead of chop leaves. If the audience is families, have parents assist their kids.
- If time is running short, have participants spend just a few minutes plucking and tearing leaves. Have enough of the herbs already chopped to use to flavor the carrots.

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More healthy cooking and shopping tips are available online at **CookingMatters.org**



Be a Whole Grain Detective

Search out tasty whole grains using these clues.

A good detective always knows to check the food label...

The first ingredient should always be a whole grain. You may see:

- Whole [name of grain, like wheat, rye, or oats]
- Whole grain [name of grain, like barley, flour, or cornmeal]
- Bulgur
- Buckwheat
- Millet
- Oatmeal
- Quinoa
- Brown rice
- Wheatberries

...and is never fooled by fakes!

- **Don't be fooled by the other ingredients!** Any whole grains listed after the first ingredient may be only a very small part of the product.
- **Don't be fooled by the name!** Just because it says "wheat" or "multigrain" in the name doesn't mean it's a whole grain.
- **Don't be fooled by the color!** Just because it's brown doesn't mean it's a whole grain.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 1/4 cups (322g)	
Servings per Recipe 6	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 160	Calories from Fat 100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 11g	17%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 14g	5%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 7g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A 15%	Vitamin C 45%
Calcium 6%	



Cooking Produce and Whole Grains

It's easy to eat more veggies and whole grains when you know how to cook them.

Try out different ways to cook veggies. Decide which work best for you!

Microwave	Stove Top	Oven
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut food into pieces that are about the same size. • Place in a microwave-safe dish with a lid. Or, cover with plastic wrap and vent. • Add a small amount of water before covering. • Cook until tender, about 4-6 minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut food into pieces that are about the same size. Add to pot. • Fill pot with 1½ inches of water. • Simmer until tender. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preheat the oven to 350°F. • Cut food into pieces that are about the same size. • Coat a baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. Spread out veggies in a single layer. • Bake for 20 minutes, or until food begins to brown at the edges.

Whole grains cook differently than refined grains. Use this chart as a guide.

To cook 1 cup of a whole grain ...	Use this much broth or water	Cook for this amount of time	To make
Whole barley	3 cups	1½ hours	4 cups
Brown rice	2 cups	45 minutes	3 cups
Whole wheat couscous	1½ cups boiling liquid	5 minutes	2½ cups
Quick oats	3 cups	5 minutes	1¾ cups
Whole wheat pasta	4 cups	7-10 minutes	2½ cups
Quinoa (rinse well)	2 cups	15 minutes	4 cups
Wild rice	3 cups	45-60 minutes	2 cups



Cooking Safely

Washing Your Hands

Washing your hands is the best way to prevent the spread of germs.

Wash your hands and children's hands:

- Before, during, and after you prepare food
- Before you eat
- After you use the bathroom, change a diaper, or clean with chemicals
- After touching animals or animal waste
- More often when someone in your home is sick



Wash your hands properly with these steps:

1. Use warm running water and soap.
2. Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). Scrub under your fingernails, between fingers, and the backs of your hands.
3. Rinse and dry hands well.

Use Knives Safely

Our recipes call for a lot of slicing, dicing, chopping, and mincing. Use these tips to cut like a pro:

- **Watch your fingers.** Tuck your fingers toward your palm on the hand that is holding the food.
- **Lead down with the tip.** Angle the tip of the knife toward the cutting board.
- **Slice.** Cut through the food with a slicing or sawing motion. Don't just push down.
- **Create a flat surface.** When working with round foods like onions or potatoes, cut them in half first. Lay the flat side down, then keep cutting.



Delicious Dips & Spreads

Pair your favorite fruits, veggies, and whole grains with easy-to-make dips.

Bean Dip

- Using a blender, mix 1 (15½-ounce) can beans (cannellini, chickpeas, black beans, etc.) rinsed and drained, 1 minced garlic clove, ¼ cup water, 1 Tablespoon canola oil, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon ground black pepper.
- For extra kick, add ¼ cup salsa. For a thicker dip, add ¼ cup low-fat yogurt. For a different flavor, add ¼ cup of your favorite rinsed and minced fresh herbs.
- Serve with cut-up fresh veggies, with whole wheat pita wedges or crackers, or as a sandwich spread.

Honey Mustard Dip • *Chef Bob Casey, Boston, Mass.*

- Mix ½ cup plain nonfat yogurt, 1 Tablespoon mustard, and 1 Tablespoon honey.
- Serve with baked chicken fingers or soft whole grain pretzels.

Vegetable Dip • *Chef Alicia McCabe, Boston, Mass.*

- Mix ½ cup nonfat plain yogurt, ½ cup reduced-fat mayonnaise, and 1 Tablespoon Mrs. Dash seasoning (or use ½ teaspoon each of dried chives and parsley, ¼ teaspoon each of garlic and onion powder, and ⅛ teaspoon each of salt and pepper). Use low-fat sour cream in place of mayonnaise if you like.
- Serve with cut-up fresh veggies. Or, use as a topping for quesadillas, tacos, or chili.

If you do not have a blender, use a fork to mash more solid ingredients. Then, blend with other ingredients using a mixing spoon.

Pumpkin Dip

- Using a blender, mix 1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree, 1 cup low-fat cream cheese (softened), ¼ cup powdered sugar, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, and ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg.
- Serve with whole wheat graham crackers or apple wedges. Or, use as a spread on whole wheat toast or bread.

Ricotta Fruit Dip

- Mix 8 ounces low-fat ricotta cheese, ½ cup nonfat vanilla yogurt, 3 Tablespoons of your favorite fruit preserves or jam, and ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon.
- Serve with cut-up fresh fruit or whole wheat crackers. Or, use as a spread on whole wheat toast, bread, or pancakes.

Fruit Yogurt Dip

- Using a blender, mix 1 cup low-fat cream cheese (softened), ½ cup nonfat vanilla yogurt, ½ cup fruit puree — such as crushed pineapple, berries, or mashed banana — 1 teaspoon honey, and ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon.
- Serve with cut-up fresh fruits. Try apples, bananas, grapes, or strawberries.

Drink Smart

Make smart choices to quench your thirst.



Instead of sodas ...

★ Make your own fruit sodas

- Fill a pitcher or glass, half with 100% fruit juice and half with seltzer water.
- Cut a lime in half. Remove seeds. Squeeze the juice into your drink.
- Stir together and enjoy!

Instead of fruit-flavored or sports drinks ...

★ Drink 100% juice

★ Drink water

★ Make your own fruit smoothies (page 85)

★ Make your own flavored water

- Cut up fruit slices, like lemons, limes, oranges, watermelon, or cucumbers.
- Pour a pitcher or glass of ice water. Add fruit slices and stir.
- For a different flavor, add chopped fresh herbs like mint or rosemary to your water.



Drink to Your Health

Drink smart to play hard!

Drink Water and Milk Often

Water and milk have fewer calories and are better for our health.

Water

- Choose tap water over bottled water. It's safe and it's free.
- Add flavor to water by mixing in fresh fruit slices or mint leaves.

Milk

- Choose low-fat (1% or skim) milk. It has the same amount of calcium as regular milk, but less fat and fewer calories.

Drink 100% Juice Sometimes

Juice can provide important nutrients but is high in sugar and calories.

100% Fruit Juice

- Check the label to be sure it's 100% juice.
- Cut the sugar in half. Mix with sparkling water to make "fruit sodas."
- Choose whole fruits instead of juice when you can.

Limit or Avoid Sugary Drinks

Sugary drinks are packed with calories. They don't give you the nutrients you need.

Instead Of...	Try This
Soft Drinks	Combine 100% juice and seltzer water to make your own healthy sodas with less sugar and fewer calories.
Fruit-Flavored Drinks	Choose 100% juice. Or, flavor tap water with fresh fruit slices or mint leaves.
Sports or Energy Drinks	Replace the fluids you lose being active with water.



Fresh, Frozen, and Canned

Enjoy fruits and vegetables in all their forms.

There is not a “best” form of fruits and vegetables. Each has its pros and cons:

	Pros	Cons	Try These Tips
Fresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater variety • Able to touch, smell, and see before buying • Can cost less when purchased in season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be used quickly before going bad • Need to learn about ripeness and storage • Can cost more if not in season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase fresh produce when in season to save money. • Ask the produce clerk how to select or store unfamiliar produce. • Purchase enough for 1 week, or the amount of time before you will shop again. • See tips for using up fresh produce before it goes bad.*
Frozen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frozen at peak freshness • Can cost less compared to out-of-season produce • Long shelf life (up to 6 months) • Little preparation required • Available year-round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have added sodium, sugar, and/or fat • Texture changes with freezing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose frozen fruits or vegetables with no sodium, sugar, or fat added. • Store at 0°F or lower to prevent nutrient loss.
Canned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canned at peak freshness • Can cost less compared to out-of-season produce • Long shelf life (2–4 years) • Little preparation required • Available year-round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have added sodium, sugar, and/or fat • Texture changes with canning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose canned vegetables low in sodium and fat. • Choose fruit canned in juice. • Rinse off canned vegetables before using to reduce sodium.

*Use up fresh fruits and vegetables before they go bad:

- Combine fruits in a fruit salad. Or, cook a tasty fruit dessert.
- Top cereal with sliced fruit.
- Chop and store fresh fruits in freezer. Use for smoothies (page 85).
- Use overripe produce in muffins, breads, or to top pancakes.
- Add vegetables to soups, stews, casseroles, pastas, sauces, or omelettes.
- Combine vegetables and a little salad dressing for a side dish or snack.

Fun with Fruits and Veggies

Offer fruits and vegetables at each meal in ways that are fun for kids.



Let kids play with their food.

- Ask kids to describe the shapes of fruits and veggies.
- Make faces on bread or bagel halves. Spread cream cheese or peanut butter. Use fruits and veggies to make eyes, eyebrows, nose, cheeks, and a smile.
- Let them hold, touch, smell, or just look at foods to explore them — even if they don't eat them.

Talk about all the colors.

- Help kids learn their colors by telling you which ones are on their plate.
- Make a wall chart. Let kids put a sticker by each color they eat that day.
- Connect colors to things kids know. Relate red tomatoes to a red toy they like or to Spiderman's red cape.

Add new flavors.

- Add a small amount of canola oil, a dab of syrup, and some salt and pepper to sweeten cooked veggies.
- Serve raw or lightly steamed veggies with a healthy dip recipe (page 57).

Try different cooking methods.

- Kids often don't like the mushy look or taste of overcooked vegetables. Lightly steam or sauté veggies just until tender.
- Use fruit in a fruit salad or Yogurt Parfait (page 104). Try mashing, steaming, baking, or broiling veggies.

Make a game out of trying new things.

- Have kids taste-test vegetables seasoned with different flavors. Let them vote for the one they like most.
- Make up silly songs about a new fruit or vegetable. Have kids sing them as you show them the new food.

Know Your Fats

Fats and oils are vital to our health — but not all fats are created equal.



What you need to know about the fats we eat:

	Unsaturated	Saturated	Trans
Are these fats good for you?	Yes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower “bad” cholesterol (LDL) Lower your risk of heart disease and stroke Provide fats your body needs, like omega-3 fatty acids 	No. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) Raise your risk of heart disease and stroke 	No. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise your “bad” cholesterol (LDL) Lower your “good” cholesterol (HDL) Raise your risk of heart disease and stroke
Which foods contain these fats?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetable oils (like olive oil, canola oil, or sunflower oil) Avocados Peanut butter Fatty fish Many nuts and seeds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many animal foods (like fatty beef, poultry with skin, lard, cream, butter, cheese, and whole milk) Baked goods Fried foods Coconut oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baked goods such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastries Pie crusts Biscuits Cookies Crackers Stick margarines Shortenings
How much should you eat each day?	Most of the fat you eat should be unsaturated.	Limit the amount of saturated fats you eat each day.	Avoid <i>trans</i> fats.

Use these steps to limit unhealthy fats:

- For protein, choose lean cuts of meat or poultry. Or, choose non-meat proteins like fish, beans, lentils, nuts, and seeds.
- Cook meats by roasting, grilling, or stir-frying. Avoid deep-frying.
- Read labels. Choose foods with less saturated fat and no *trans* fats.
- Read the ingredients list. Avoid foods that list “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” oils.
- Watch out for baked goods, crackers, margarines, and shortenings. They often contain *trans* fat.

Label Lingo

Use the label to guide your food choices.

Watch out!
Make sure you know
how many servings
are in each package.

Look for foods
with less saturated
fat and no trans fat.

Look for foods
with more fiber
and less sugar.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 1/4 cups (322g)
Servings per Package 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230 **Calories from Fat** 40

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4.5g **7%**

Saturated Fat 0.5g **3%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 15mg **5%**

Sodium 440mg **18%**

Total Carbohydrate 41g **14%**

Dietary Fiber 9g **36%**

Sugars 9g

Protein 9g

Vitamin A 20% • Vitamin C 80%

Calcium 8% • Iron 15%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Menu Mania

Order smart when you're out to eat.



Look for fruits, vegetables, and whole grains on the menu.

- Choose a salad with dressing on the side for your main meal.
- Add vegetables to your pizza.
- Order a small side salad, baby carrots, or a fruit cup instead of fries.
- Ask for whole wheat bread or brown rice.
- Order low-fat yogurt with fruit instead of a milkshake.



Choose healthy drinks.

- Order low-fat milk, water, or 100% juice instead of sugary drinks.

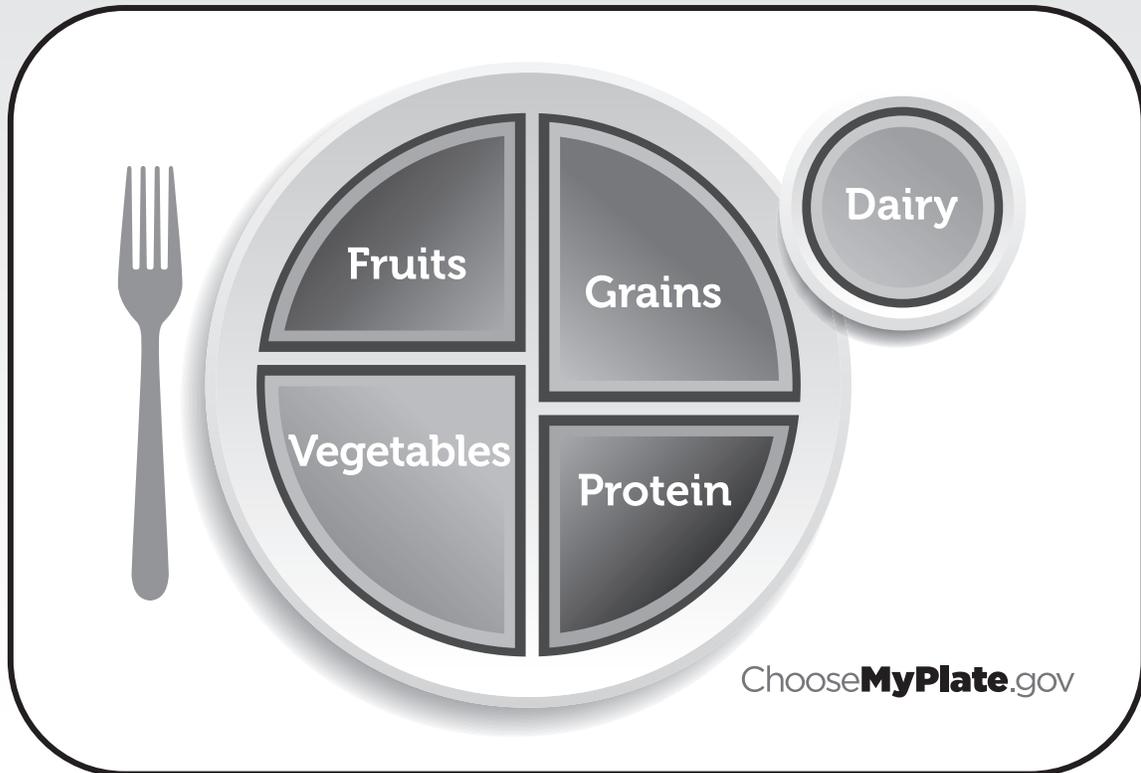
Watch your portions.

- Choose a single instead of double- or triple-decker burgers.
- Order a small if you choose fries or a sugary drink.
- Split larger meals with a family member or friend.



MyPlate

Eat right. Have fun.



Vegetables

Vary your veggies.

- Make half your plate fruits and veggies.
- Color your plate! Fill it with dark green (like broccoli or spinach), orange (like carrots or sweet potatoes), and other colorful veggies.



Fruits

Focus on fruits.

- Make half your plate fruits and veggies.
- Color your plate! Fill it with red, yellow, orange, blue, and purple fruits.
- Whole fruits are a better choice than juice.



Grains

Make at least half your grains whole.

- Start smart with breakfast. Look for whole grain cereals.
- Just because bread is brown doesn't mean it's whole grain. Check the ingredients list to be sure the first word is "whole."



Protein

Go lean with protein.

- Eat lean or low-fat meat, chicken, turkey, and fish. Ask for it baked, broiled, or grilled — not fried.
- Mix it up! Beans, peas, nuts, seeds, and eggs are all great sources of protein, too.



Dairy

Get your calcium-rich foods.

- Look at the carton or package to make sure your milk, yogurt, or cheese is fat-free or low-fat (1%).
- Calcium builds strong bones. If you can't have milk products, choose other calcium sources like fortified soy milk.



Snack Smart

Instead of fruit-flavored snacks ...

★ Make Fruit Salad

- Wash and peel a variety of colorful fruits.
- Cut fruits into bite-size pieces. Combine in a large bowl.
- Cut a lime in half. Squeeze the juice over the fruit.
- Drizzle a Tablespoon of honey if you like.
- Stir ingredients to combine and enjoy!



Instead of snack or energy bars ...

★ Make Banana Crunch

- Mash a large, ripe banana in a bowl.
- Add ¼ cup of granola.
- Add a dash of cinnamon.
- Mix ingredients together.
- Spread mixture onto whole wheat wafers or graham crackers and enjoy!

★ Make Avocado Crunch

- Mash a ripe avocado in a bowl.
- Add juice from half a lemon, 2 teaspoons of sunflower seeds, and a pinch of salt.
- Spread over whole wheat crackers. Or, eat with vegetable slices.

Instead of peanut butter crackers ...

★ Make Peanut Butter Sticks

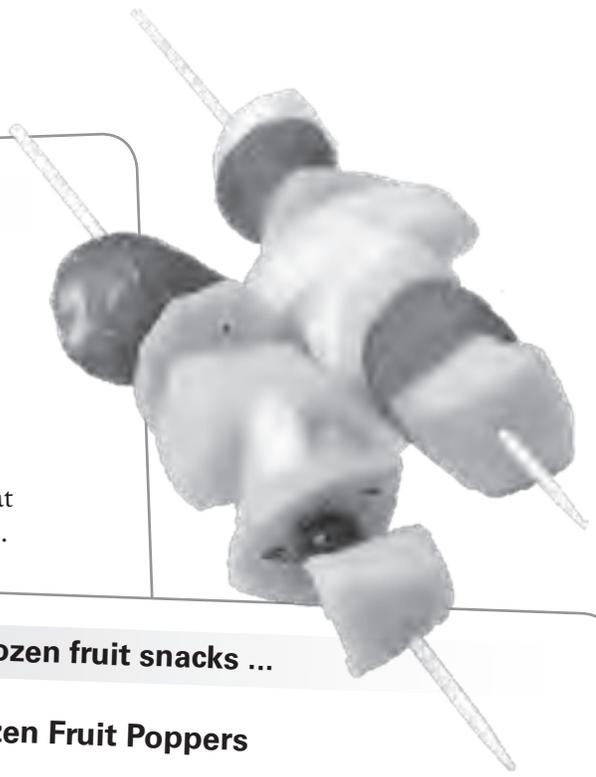
- Wash and cut celery into short sticks.
- Spread a thin layer of peanut butter onto celery sticks.
- Top peanut butter with raisins and enjoy!



Instead of cheesy crackers ...

★ **Make Fruit and Cheese Kabobs**

- Cut block cheese into small cubes.
- Wash, peel, and cut a variety of colorful fruits into bite-size pieces.
- Slide food onto coffee stirrer “skewers” or whole wheat pretzel sticks. Switch between fruit and cheese pieces.



★ **Make Cucumber Sammies**

- Cut cucumbers into thin slices.
- Top half of the slices with small pieces of turkey and cheese.
- Cover each one with another cucumber slice.

Instead of frozen fruit snacks ...

★ **Make Frozen Fruit Poppers**

- Wash and peel a variety of colorful fruits.
- Cut fruits into bite-size pieces. Place in a freezer-safe plastic bag.
- Let freeze in the freezer. Pull out and enjoy!

★ **Make Fruit Pops**

- In a blender, combine fresh or frozen fruit pieces, water, and a small amount of honey or sugar. Blend together.
- Pour mixture evenly into empty ice cube trays.
- Freeze until slushy, about 45 minutes. Stick a popsicle stick or toothpick into each cube. Place back in the freezer for 1 hour or until frozen.

Instead of ice cream ...

★ **Make your own yogurt parfaits** (page 104)



Instead of potato chips or salty snacks ...

★ **Make your own trail mix** (page 99)

Super Snackers

Power up with healthy snacks between meals.

- Make snacks using foods from at least two food groups.
- Go for the food groups you haven't eaten yet that day.
- Eat snacks 2-3 hours before meal time. Keep portions small.
- Check Nutrition Facts on the food package. Avoid snacks high in fat, sugar, or salt.
- Plan ahead so you always have healthy, tasty snacks on hand.

Draw a line between foods in each column to create healthy snacks. Connect foods from different food groups!

Whole wheat crackers	Low-fat cheese
Low-fat yogurt	Peanut butter
Fresh fruit slices	Low-fat milk
Veggie sticks	Granola
Pretzels	Whole grain bagels
Raisins	Graham crackers
String cheese	Low-fat salad dressing
Turkey slices	Whole grain cereal
No-butter popcorn	Berries

Our other healthy snack ideas:

Vary Your Fruits and Veggies

Choose fresh, frozen, and canned produce to meet your daily goals.

Choose from all the color groups. Check out what each color can do for you.

Red

- Improved memory
- A healthy heart
- Lower risk for some cancers



Orange/Yellow

- Sharp vision
- A healthy heart
- Strength to fight off colds and illness
- Lower risk for some cancers



White

- A healthy heart



Green

- Sharp vision
- Strong bones and teeth
- Lower risk for some cancers



Blue/Purple

- Good memory
- Healthy aging
- Lower risk for some cancers



Eat different parts of the plant that appeal to your tastes.

Seeds

Lima beans, pinto beans, pumpkin seeds, black beans, peas, dry split peas, corn



Roots

Beets, onions, carrots, parsnips, potatoes, radishes, rutabaga, sweet potatoes, jicama



Stems

Asparagus, bamboo shoots, bok choy, broccoli, celery, rhubarb



Leaves

Brussels sprouts, parsley, cabbage, spinach, collards, turnip greens, kale, chard, lettuce, endive, watercress



Flowers

Broccoli, cauliflower



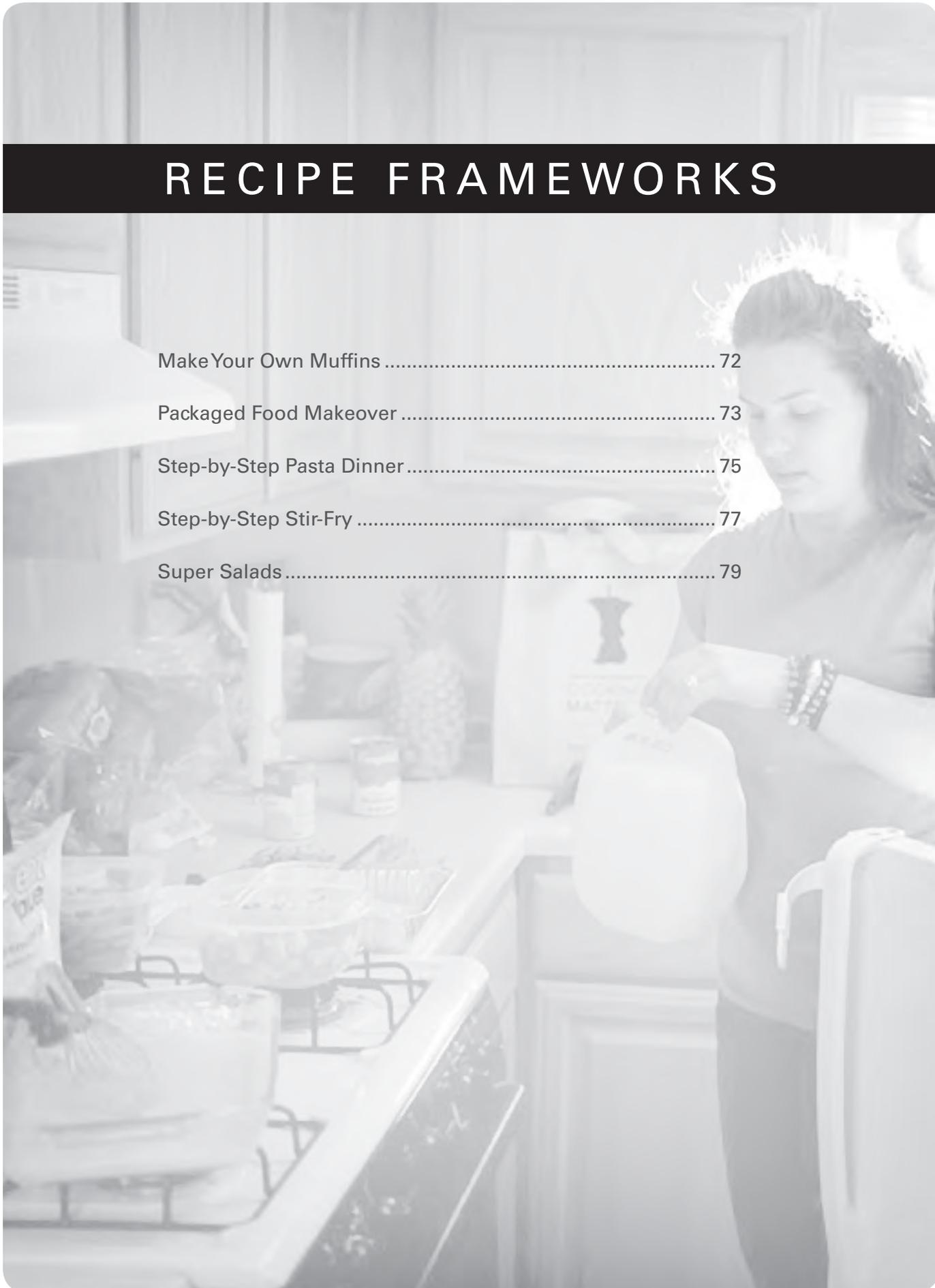
Fruit

Apples, avocados, grapes, cucumbers, bananas, pumpkins, bell peppers, dates, grapefruit, berries, eggplant, plums, melons, oranges, strawberries, tomatoes



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Make Your Own Muffins

Muffins make a great grab-and-go breakfast or snack.

Make a large batch on a day you have some extra time. Then pull one out to take on the go! Follow these steps to make 12 muffins.

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Coat a 12-cup muffin pan with non-stick cooking spray. Or, use muffin tin liner cups.
3. Make muffin dry mix: In a large bowl, whisk together 1½ cups whole wheat flour, 1 cup all-purpose flour, 1½ teaspoons baking powder, and ¼ teaspoon salt. Add **Optional Dry Flavorings**.
4. Make muffin wet mix: In a medium bowl, whisk together 2 large eggs, 1 cup nonfat or low-fat milk, ¾ cup brown or granulated sugar, 2 Tablespoons melted unsalted butter, 2 Tablespoons canola oil, and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. Add **Optional Wet Flavorings**.
5. Add wet mix to dry mix. Stir until just combined. Fold in **Fruits and Veggies** and **Optional Add-Ins**.
6. Bake muffins until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with just a couple of moist crumbs attached, 20–25 minutes.
7. Let cool in the pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and let cool completely.



Optional Dry Flavorings (1–1½ teaspoons total)
Ground cinnamon
Ground nutmeg
Ground allspice
Ground ginger
Pumpkin pie spice



Optional Wet Flavorings
½ teaspoon coconut or almond extract
1 Tablespoon lemon, lime, or orange zest



Fruits and Veggies (2 cups total)
Fresh or frozen (not thawed) berries
Diced or mashed bananas
Diced mango or pineapple
Shredded apples or pears
Shredded carrots, zucchini, or parsnips



Optional Add-Ins (up to ½ cup total)
Dried fruit, such as raisins, cherries, currants, or cranberries
Toasted chopped or slivered nuts
Mini chocolate chips
Shredded unsweetened coconut



Try these combos!

Spiced Banana-Nut Muffins

Add ½ teaspoon each ground cinnamon, nutmeg, and allspice to the dry mix. Combine wet and dry mixes. Stir in diced bananas and chopped pecans.

Zucchini-Raisin Muffins

Add 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon to the dry mix. Combine wet and dry mixes. Stir in zucchini and raisins.

Blueberry-Ginger Muffins

Add 1½ teaspoons ground ginger to the dry mix. Combine wet and dry mixes. Stir in blueberries.

Chef's Notes:

- To freeze leftover muffins, wrap each one in plastic wrap. Place in an airtight container. Freeze up to 1 month.
- Use up fruits and veggies that are starting to get too ripe.
- To make bread instead of muffins, coat a loaf pan with non-stick cooking spray. Bake at 375°F for 50–60 minutes.

Packaged Food Makeover

Love the convenience of packaged foods? Try these tips for making them healthier — or making them yourself!



Packaged Food	Make It Healthier	Make It Yourself
Ramen noodles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for brands that bake the noodles instead of frying them. • Stir in fresh or frozen veggies. Try broccoli, peas, edamame (soy beans), or spinach. • Add protein if you like. Try leftover cooked chicken, fish, or beef. Or, add cubes of tofu. • Use only half of the seasoning packet. 	<p>Cook whole grain angel hair pasta and your favorite chopped veggies in low-sodium broth until tender. Add leftover cooked chicken, fish, or beef, cubed tofu, or thawed edamame. Cook until heated through. Season with low-sodium soy sauce.</p>
“Just add meat” boxed meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lean ground beef, chicken, or turkey. • Drain fat from cooked meat. • Add whatever veggies you have on hand. Try broccoli, carrots, or spinach. 	<p>Try these recipes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheesy Hamburger Skillet* • Barley Jambalaya* • Tex-Mex Skillet*
Boxed macaroni and cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add fresh or frozen broccoli or spinach to the pasta during the last few minutes of cooking. 	<p>Homemade mac and cheese is easier to make than you may think! Try our stovetop version.*</p>
Frozen pizza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy a plain cheese pizza. Add your own toppings. • Top with your favorite cooked veggies. Try broccoli, peppers, onions, and olives. • If you want meat, add low-fat turkey pepperoni. Or, use cooked chicken or turkey sausage. • Look for whole grain crusts if you can find them. If not, look for thin crusts. 	<p>Making your own pizza is fun for the whole family. Try The Works Pizza.* If you have time, make your own whole grain crust using our dough recipe.*</p>

* Recipes are available at CookingMatters.org

Continued >

Packaged Food Makeover continued >

Packaged Food	Make It Healthier	Make It Yourself
Taco dinner kits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for taco kits with whole wheat or corn tortillas. Use lean ground beef, chicken, or turkey. Cook half the amount of ground meat called for. Drain fat. Stir a can of rinsed and drained black beans or pinto beans into the cooked meat. Add cooked veggies like chopped tomatoes or shredded zucchini. Top with low-fat cheese or sour cream. 	Set up a taco buffet! Start with our Turkey Tacos recipe.* Let each family member add toppings to suit his or her taste.
Frozen or prepackaged Chinese food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If veggies aren't included, stir them in! Try bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, and edamame. 	Try our Chinese Veggies and Rice* or Asian Noodles with Peanut Butter Sauce.* Or, make your own stir-fry (page 77).
Canned ravioli or pasta dishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for products made with whole grain pasta. Add your favorite cooked veggies. Try zucchini, yellow squash, or spinach. Or, serve with a veggie-filled side salad (see page 79). 	Make your own pasta dinner using the options on page 75! Or, try some of our tasty pasta recipes like Spaghetti and Meatballs* or Pasta with Beans and Greens.*
Frozen chicken nuggets or fish sticks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare labels. Choose a brand with less saturated fat and sodium. Look for chicken nuggets made with white meat instead of dark. Serve with a hearty salad (page 79) or a colorful vegetable side dish (page 88 or 90). If fries on the side are a must, make your own Sweet Potato Fries.* 	It's easy to make your own chicken fingers or fish sticks! Try our Baked Flaked Chicken* or Baked Flaked Fish With Tartar Sauce* for healthy, baked versions. Serve with colorful side dishes.
Frozen waffles or pancakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for whole grain pancakes or waffles. Top with fresh fruit and yogurt instead of syrup. 	Make a batch of our Orange Oatmeal Pancakes* on a day you have extra time. Freeze them in single servings. Pull them out when you're in a hurry.

* Recipes are available at CookingMatters.org

Step-by-Step Pasta Dinner

Pinching pennies? Make it a pasta night!

Pasta is a budget-friendly whole grain. Choose ingredients from the chart below to make a meal for four. Then, follow the step-by-step directions and review the chef's notes.

Pasta (½ pound)	+	Protein	+	Veggies (2 cups total, any combo)	+	Sauce (1–2 cups)	+	Seasonings (Optional, to taste)
Whole grain pasta		Lean ground beef, turkey, or chicken, cooked and drained (1 pound)		Spinach, chard, or kale		Marinara		Dried basil
Brown rice pasta		Extra-firm tofu, drained and crumbled (14-ounce package)		Broccoli		Peanut Sauce		Dried oregano
		Beans, rinsed and drained (1 can or 2 cups cooked)		Carrots		Canned diced or crushed tomatoes		Garlic powder or minced fresh garlic
		Frozen peas or edamame (soy beans), thawed and drained (2 cups)		Sugar snap or snow peas		Quick Cheese Sauce (recipe on page 76)		
		Chicken or turkey sausage, cooked and sliced (1 pound)		Zucchini or yellow squash		Simple White Sauce (recipe on page 76)		

Directions

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. In a colander, drain pasta.
2. Cook protein as needed. If using, add optional fresh garlic during the last minute of cooking time.
3. Cook veggies by steaming, grilling, roasting, sauteing, or adding to boiling pasta water during the last few minutes of cooking. See *Cooking Produce and Whole Grains* (page 55) for other tips.
4. In a large pot over medium heat, heat sauce. If using, add optional spices now. Add protein and veggies to heat through. Toss with hot cooked pasta and serve.

Chef's Notes

- New to whole grain pasta? Start with a whole grain blend. Once you are used to the taste, switch to 100% whole wheat pasta.
- Use ground meat that is 90% lean or leaner. Drain excess fat from meat after cooking.



Continued >

Try these combos!

Asian Noodles

Whole grain spaghetti + tofu + sugar snap peas + carrots + peanut sauce

Summer Pasta Primavera

Whole grain pasta + diced tomatoes + cannellini beans + zucchini + garlic

Spaghetti and Meat Sauce

Whole grain pasta + lean ground beef + broccoli + marinara sauce + dried basil + dried oregano + garlic



Sauce Recipes

Simple White Sauce

1. In a small bowl, use a fork to whisk together 2 Tablespoons cornstarch and 1 cup nonfat or low-fat milk until smooth.
2. In a large saucepan over medium heat, add milk mixture. Cook until thickened, stirring constantly, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in 2 teaspoons mustard. Season with dried or fresh herbs as you like, such as basil, parsley, or dill. Start with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon and add to your taste.
4. Remove from heat. Add salt and pepper to taste. Serve hot.

Quick Cheese Sauce

1. Grate 2 ounces low-fat cheddar cheese.
2. Follow instructions for Simple White Sauce above. In step 3, stir in cheese along with the mustard and seasonings, until melted.



Step-by-Step Stir-Fry

Want a quick and healthy weeknight meal? Try a stir-fry!

Stir-fries are a great way to use up veggies that may soon go bad. Choose ingredients and follow the directions below to make a tasty meal for four.

Veggies (2–3 cups total, any combo)	+	Protein	+	Optional Flavoring (1 Tablespoon)	+	Sauce (1 recipe batch, see page 78)	+	Grain (1 cup dry)
Bell pepper, sliced		Boneless, skinless chicken breasts or thighs, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces (1 pound)		Minced garlic		Peanut Sauce		Brown rice
Carrots or celery, sliced		Sirloin or flank steak, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces (1 pound)		Minced ginger (or ½ teaspoon ground ginger)		Spicy Soy Sauce		Whole grain cous-cous
Snow peas, sugar snap peas, or green beans, trimmed		Pork tenderloin or boneless loin chops, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces (1 pound)				Lemon Stir-Fry Sauce		Instant barley
Broccoli or cauliflower florets		Extra-firm tofu, drained and cut into 1-inch cubes (14-ounce package)						Rice noodles or whole grain pasta
Mushrooms or onion, sliced		Frozen edamame (soy beans), thawed and drained (2 cups)						
Zucchini or yellow squash, sliced								
Cabbage, thinly sliced								
Canned water chestnuts, rinsed and drained								



Continued >

Try these sauces!

Peanut Sauce

In a small bowl, stir together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup peanut butter, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup warm water, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-sodium soy sauce, 2 Tablespoons cider vinegar, and 4 teaspoons sugar.

Spicy Soy Sauce

In a small bowl, stir together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup low-sodium soy sauce, 1 Tablespoon brown sugar, 1 Tablespoon cornstarch, 1 teaspoon minced jalapeno, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground ginger.

Lemon Stir-Fry Sauce

In a small bowl, stir together 3 Tablespoons lemon juice, 3 Tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce, and 2 teaspoons cornstarch.

Directions

If using meat or poultry as your protein:

1. Cook grains following package directions. While grains cook, make stir-fry.
2. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat 1 Tablespoon canola oil. Add meat or poultry. Stir occasionally until just cooked through, about 4–6 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
3. Add veggies to skillet. Start with harder veggies first (e.g., green beans, onion, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower). As they begin to soften, add softer veggies (e.g., zucchini, yellow squash) and keep cooking. Total cooking time may be about 10 minutes.
4. If using garlic and/or ginger, add to skillet when all veggies are soft. Stir until fragrant, about 15 seconds.
5. If using peanut sauce or other thick sauce, remove pan from heat and stir in sauce. If using Spicy Soy Sauce, Lemon Stir-Fry Sauce, or other thin sauce, add to pan and bring to a boil. Cook until thickened, about 1–2 minutes.
6. Stir cooked meat or poultry into veggie mixture. Serve stir-fry over cooked grains.

If using tofu or edamame as your protein:

- Follow directions above, omitting step 2. Add tofu or edamame in step 3, during the last 3–5 minutes of vegetable cooking time. Heat through.



Super Salads

Load up on veggies with a tasty salad.

Serve a small salad before dinner. Or, add protein to make a quick and tasty weeknight meal. Add ingredients from each column to make a salad for four.

Greens (4 cups)	+	Veggies (1-2 cups total, any combo)	+	Optional Protein (2 cups)	+	Optional Add-Ins (½ cup)	+	Salad Dressing (¼ cup, recipes on page 80)
Leaf lettuce		Raw beets or carrots, peeled and shredded		Canned beans, rinsed and drained		Toasted nuts or seeds, chopped or sliced		Oil and vinegar
Spinach		Broccoli or cauliflower, chopped		Hard-boiled eggs, chopped		Cheese, shredded or crumbled		Honey mustard
Romaine lettuce		Cucumber, chopped or sliced		Roasted chicken, turkey, beef, or pork, shredded or sliced		Cooked barley, brown rice, or whole grain pasta		Citrus dressing
Mixed salad greens		Tomatoes, diced (canned or fresh)		Extra-firm tofu, crumbled and drained		Olives, sliced		Balsamic vinaigrette
		Corn kernels or peas (fresh or frozen, thawed)		Frozen peas or edamame (soy beans), thawed and drained		Orange or grapefruit, cut into segments		Low-fat ranch
		Radishes, sliced				Whole grain croutons		
		Bell pepper, chopped				Dried fruit		

Try these combos!

Simple Spinach Salad

Spinach + shredded carrots + hard-boiled eggs + honey mustard dressing

Winter Salad

Mixed salad greens + shredded beets + grapefruit or orange segments + citrus dressing

Fast Southwestern Dinner Salad

Romaine lettuce + corn + diced tomatoes + black beans + cooked and chilled brown rice + shredded cheddar + sliced olives + citrus dressing with a pinch of chili powder



Continued >

Dress foods up with homemade salad dressing.

Make salad dressing just the way you like it with a few basic items. Follow this ratio:

- 2 parts olive or canola oil
- 1 part acid, such as vinegar, lemon or lime juice, or Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper

Chef's Notes:

- For a thinner Ranch dressing, use more vinegar. For a thicker Ranch, good for cut-up veggies, use less.
- You can use milk instead of vinegar in the Ranch if you prefer.

Simple Salad Dressing	Honey Mustard	Citrus Dressing	Balsamic Vinaigrette	Creamy Low-Fat Ranch Dressing
3 Tablespoons olive oil 2 Tablespoons red wine vinegar 1 teaspoon salt ¼ teaspoon pepper	6 Tablespoons mustard ½ Tablespoon fresh lemon juice or cider vinegar 1½ Tablespoons honey 1 teaspoon oil Salt and pepper to taste	2 Tablespoons lime, lemon, or orange juice 3-4 Tablespoons oil Salt and pepper to taste	2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar 1 Tablespoon Dijon mustard 3-4 Tablespoons oil Salt and pepper to taste	1 (6-ounce) container plain nonfat or low-fat yogurt ⅓ cup low-fat mayonnaise 2 Tablespoons white vinegar 1 Tablespoon dried dill ¼ teaspoon garlic powder ⅛ teaspoon salt

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Apple Wraps

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Serves 4, ½ wrap per serving

Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

- 1 large apple
- 2 medium, ripe bananas
- 2 Tablespoons peanut butter
- 2 (8-inch) whole wheat tortillas

Materials

- Cutting board • Measuring spoons
- Medium bowl • Sharp knife

Directions

1. Rinse and cut apple in half, lengthwise. Remove any stems. Cut out center core that contains the seeds. Do not peel.
2. Lay apple halves flat side down. Cut into ¼-inch thick slices. Cut slices into small cubes.
3. Peel bananas. In a medium bowl, use your fingers to break bananas into pieces. Use your fingers or a fork to mash pieces until creamy and smooth.
4. Add peanut butter to mashed banana. Stir well to blend.
5. Spread peanut butter mixture over one side of each tortilla.
6. Sprinkle diced apple over peanut butter. Tightly roll each tortilla. Cut each wrap in half.
7. Chill in refrigerator until ready to serve, up to 24 hours.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 wrap (147g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 190 **Calories from Fat** 50

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 5g **8%**

 Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

 Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 210mg **9%**

Total Carbohydrate 35g **12%**

 Dietary Fiber 5g **20%**

 Sugars 15g

Protein 5g

Vitamin A 2% • Vitamin C 15%

Calcium 8% • Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Banana Pudding in a Bag

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Serves 4, ½ cup per serving

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

½ cup low-fat granola
3 medium bananas
½ cup applesauce, unsweetened
½ cup nonfat vanilla yogurt

Materials

Large zip-top plastic bag •
Measuring cups

Directions

1. In a large zip-top plastic bag, add granola. Squeeze any air out of bag and seal. Lightly crush granola using a can or the bottom of a measuring cup.
2. Peel bananas. Use your fingers to break them up into the bag of crushed granola.
3. Add applesauce and yogurt to banana mixture in bag.
4. Press out any extra air before sealing bag again.
5. Use your fingers to squish and mash ingredients together until well blended.
6. Chill pudding inside sealed bag in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

Chef's Notes

- Make your own granola! Use the recipe on page 87.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup per serving
(160g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 160 **Calories from Fat** 10

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 1g **2%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 25mg **1%**

Total Carbohydrate 38g **13%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **16%**

Sugars 20g

Protein 4g

Vitamin A 2% • Vitamin C 15%

Calcium 6% • Iron 4%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Black Bean and Vegetable Quesadillas

Chef Deborah Kelly • Chicago, Ill.

Serves 6, 1 folded quesadilla per serving

Prep time: 25 minutes • Cook time: 20 minutes



Ingredients

½ (15½-ounce) can black beans, no salt added
 2 medium zucchini
 1 bunch fresh spinach (about 4 cups)
 1 ear fresh corn or 1 cup canned corn
 4 ounces low-fat cheddar cheese
 1 Tablespoon canola oil
 Pinch ground cayenne pepper
 1–2 teaspoons water
 ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
 6 (8-inch) whole wheat flour tortillas
 Non-stick cooking spray

Optional Ingredients

3 Tablespoons fresh parsley or cilantro

Materials

Box grater • Can opener • Colander
 • Cutting board • Fork • Large skillet with lid • Measuring spoons
 • Medium bowl • Rubber spatula • Sharp knife

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 folded quesadilla (228g)
 Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 **Calories from Fat** 60

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 6g **9%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 5mg **2%**

Sodium 500mg **21%**

Total Carbohydrate 37g **12%**

Dietary Fiber 7g **28%**

Sugars 6g

Protein 13g

Vitamin A 80% • Vitamin C 40%

Calcium 30% • Iron 20%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Directions

1. In a colander, drain and rinse black beans.
2. Rinse zucchini. Cut into thin slices or shred with a grater.
3. Rinse and chop fresh spinach. If using fresh parsley or cilantro, rinse and chop now.
4. If using fresh corn, peel. Use a knife to cut corn kernels off of the cob. If using canned corn, drain.
5. Grate cheese.
6. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add zucchini and cayenne pepper. Cook until zucchini is semi-soft, about 5 minutes.
7. Add corn and spinach. Cover and cook until tender, stirring a few times, about 5 minutes more. Remove from heat.
8. Add black beans to the veggie mixture. Stir to combine. Smash beans lightly with a fork. Add 1–2 teaspoons water to make a bean-and-veggie paste.
9. Season mixture with black pepper. If using parsley or cilantro, add now. Transfer mixture to medium bowl. Reserve skillet.
10. Spread vegetable mixture evenly on half of each tortilla. Sprinkle cheese on top. Fold tortillas over. Press lightly with spatula to flatten.
11. Spray skillet lightly with non-stick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Add one folded tortilla. Cook about 4 minutes per side, or until both sides of tortilla are golden brown. Repeat until all quesadillas are cooked.
12. Cut each quesadilla into 2 wedges. Serve while hot.

Chef's Notes

- Add your favorite veggies to the filling. In place of zucchini and spinach, use up leftover cooked veggies like collards, squash, or bell peppers.
- To cut costs, use frozen spinach. Defrost, drain, and squeeze completely dry before adding.
- Top with low-fat yogurt or salsa.
- Use the remaining beans in a soup or to top a salad.

Fruit Smoothies

Chef Susan Goss • Chicago, Ill.

Serves 2, 1 cup per serving

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

1 medium banana
½ cup ice cubes
1 cup low-fat plain yogurt
½ cup 100% orange juice
4 frozen strawberries

Optional Ingredients

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

Materials

Measuring cups

Special Materials

Blender

Directions

1. Peel banana. Place in blender.
2. Add remaining ingredients to the blender. If using cinnamon, add now.
3. Cover and blend until smooth.

Chef's Notes

- Use any fresh or frozen fruit, such as peaches, blueberries, raspberries, or mangoes. Use fruits in season when you can.
- For a creamier smoothie, use nonfat, soy, or 1% milk instead of orange juice.
- Freeze slices of fruits that are about to go bad. Use these in your smoothies.
- If smoothie is too thick, add water or ice. If smoothie is too thin, add more fruit.
- If you don't have a blender, use a fork to mash the fruit. Whisk in the other ingredients. Serve over ice.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (299g)
Servings per Recipe 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 150 **Calories from Fat** 15

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 1.5g **2%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 10mg **3%**

Sodium 65mg **3%**

Total Carbohydrate 30g **10%**

Dietary Fiber 2g **8%**

Sugars 19g

Protein 6g

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 50%

Calcium 15% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Homemade Corn Tortilla Chips

Serves 12, 4 chips per serving

Prep time: 5 minutes • Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

8 (6-inch) corn tortillas
Non-stick cooking spray

Materials

Baking sheet • Cutting board •
Sharp knife

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Cut each corn tortilla into six triangles.
3. Coat a baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray.
4. Place tortilla slices on baking sheet. Lightly spray the chips with non-stick cooking spray to prevent burning.
5. Bake until golden brown and crispy, about 8–10 minutes.

Chef's Notes

- Try whole wheat tortillas instead of corn tortillas.
- If serving chips with savory or salty foods, sprinkle with garlic powder before baking.
- For a sweet treat, sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar before baking.
- Try serving with salsa, hummus, bean dip, or chili.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 4 chips (19g)
Servings per Recipe 12

Amount Per Serving

Calories 45 Calories from Fat 5

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0.5g **1%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 25mg **1%**

Total Carbohydrate 9g **3%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 0g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 0% • Iron 0%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Homemade Granola

Chef Joyce Roland • Seattle, Wash.

Serves 9, 1/3 cup per serving

Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: 10–15 minutes

Ingredients

4 Tablespoons honey
2 Tablespoons canola oil
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
4 Tablespoons sliced or chopped almonds
Non-stick cooking spray
1/2 cup dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, apricots, dates, or prunes)

Materials

Baking sheet • Fork • Large bowl • Measuring cups • Measuring spoons • Medium bowl

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, add honey, oil, and cinnamon. Whisk with a fork.
3. Add oats and almonds. Stir until well-coated with honey mixture.
4. Coat a baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray. Spread oat mixture evenly onto sheet.
5. Bake until lightly browned, about 10–15 minutes. Stir every 5 minutes to cook evenly. Watch closely to be sure granola does not burn. Remove from oven. Let cool completely.
6. Transfer cooled granola to a medium bowl. Stir in dried fruit.

Chef's Notes

- Make large batches. Granola can be stored at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.
- Add milk to granola and eat like cereal. Use it to top a fruit salad or nonfat plain yogurt. Or, pack single servings in a zip-top plastic bag. Eat on its own for a tasty afternoon snack.
- Use homemade granola in the Yogurt Parfait (page 104) recipe.
- Use leftover rolled oats to make oatmeal for breakfast.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/3 cup (42g)
Servings per Recipe 9

Amount Per Serving

Calories 170 **Calories from Fat** 50

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 5g **8%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 0mg **0%**

Total Carbohydrate 27g **9%**

Dietary Fiber 3g **12%**

Sugars 14g

Protein 4g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 2% • Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Kale with Sautéed Apples and Onions

Adapted from *Gourmet Magazine*, December 2000

Serves 4, 1 cup per serving

Prep time: 5 min • Cook time: 10 min

Ingredients

1 pound kale
1 large apple
1 medium onion
1 Tablespoon canola oil
½ teaspoon curry powder
½ cup water
¼ tsp salt

Materials

Cutting board • Measuring cups • Measuring spoons • Medium pot with lid • Mixing spoon • Sharp knife

Directions

1. Rinse kale. Remove tough stems and ribs. Chop leaves coarsely.
2. Rinse apple. Peel onion. Cut apple and onion into ¼-inch-thick wedges.
3. In a medium pot, heat oil over medium-high heat until hot but not smoking.
4. Add onion, stirring occasionally until golden, about 3 minutes.
5. Add apple and curry powder. Sauté, stirring until apple is almost tender, about 2 minutes.
6. Add kale and water. Put lid on the pot and cook. Stir occasionally, until kale is tender and most liquid is evaporated, about 5 minutes.
7. Season with salt before serving.

Chef's Notes

- You can use any hearty green in place of kale, like chard or spinach.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (156g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 100 Calories from Fat 35

%Daily Value*

Total Fat 4g 6%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 180mg 8%

Total Carbohydrate 16g 5%

Dietary Fiber 3g 12%

Sugars 7g

Protein 3g

Vitamin A 210% • Vitamin C 150%

Calcium 10% • Iron 8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Mango Salsa

Serves 6, ½ cup per serving

Prep time: 20 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

2 large ripe mangoes
1 small cucumber
2 medium green onions
1 medium jalapeño pepper
2 medium limes
½ teaspoon salt
Pinch of cayenne pepper

Optional Ingredients

1 medium bell pepper
¼ cup fresh cilantro

Materials

Cutting board • Measuring spoons
• Medium bowl • Plastic wrap •
Sharp knife

Directions

1. Rinse mangoes, cucumber, green onions, jalapeño pepper, limes, and bell pepper, if using.
2. Peel mangoes. Cut mango flesh from the pits.
3. Cut cucumber in half lengthwise. Remove seeds. If using bell pepper, cut in half lengthwise. Remove stems and seeds.
4. Dice mangoes, cucumber, and bell pepper, if using. Finely chop green onions.
5. Cut jalapeño pepper in half lengthwise. Remove stems and seeds and dice.
6. If using, rinse and chop cilantro.
7. Cut limes in half. Squeeze juice from each half into a medium bowl. Discard seeds.
8. Add mangoes, cucumber, green onions, jalapeño, salt, and cayenne pepper to bowl with juice. If using, add bell pepper and cilantro. Mix well.
9. Cover and refrigerate for at least one hour before serving.

Chef's Notes

- Mangoes usually feel a little softer when ripe. If mangoes are not in season or not in your store, use canned peaches or pineapple, packed in juice. Drain before using.
- Serve salsa as a dip with Homemade Corn Tortilla Chips (page 86). Or, use as a topping for fresh fish or pork, black bean soup, or tacos.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup (142g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 60 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 210mg 9%

Total Carbohydrate 15g 5%

Dietary Fiber 2g 8%

Sugars 12g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 15% • Vitamin C 45%

Calcium 2% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Moroccan Carrot Salad

Chef Nadine Nelson • Boston, Mass.

Serves 6, ¾ cup per serving

Prep time: 20 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

6 medium carrots
½ small onion
1 large lemon
3 Tablespoons canola oil
1 teaspoon curry powder
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
¼ cup dark or golden raisins

Materials

2 small bowls • Box grater •
Cutting board • Measuring cups •
Measuring spoons • Medium bowl
• Sharp knife • Vegetable peeler

Directions

1. Rinse and peel carrots and onion.
2. Shred carrots with a grater. Dice onion.
3. Rinse lemon and cut in half. In a small bowl, squeeze juice. Discard seeds.
4. In a medium bowl, combine carrots and onions.
5. In a second small bowl, combine oil, curry powder, salt, pepper, and 2 Tablespoons of the lemon juice. Mix well. Let marinate 5 minutes.
6. Pour liquid mixture over carrots and onions. Stir in raisins. Mix well.

Chef's Notes

- Replace half of the carrot with grated jicama or apples.
- For best taste, allow flavors to blend before serving. Let sit 15–20 minutes after you have mixed in the sauce in step 6.
- Serve as a colorful side dish for fish, poached chicken, or baked or broiled chicken legs.
- Layer onto a sandwich with lean turkey and fresh veggies like cucumber.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ¾ cup (87g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 110 **Calories from Fat** 60

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 7g **11%**

Saturated Fat 0.5g **3%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 240mg **10%**

Total Carbohydrate 12g **4%**

Dietary Fiber 2g **8%**

Sugars 8g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 200% • Vitamin C 10%

Calcium 2% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Northwest Apple Salad

Chef Linette True • Portland, Ore.

Serves 4, ¾ cup per serving

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook time: 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 medium Granny Smith apples
- 2 Tablespoons dried fruit, such as raisins, dried cranberries, or dried currants
- 3 Tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon whole, shelled walnuts

Optional Ingredients

- 1 Tablespoon honey

Materials

Cutting board • Measuring spoons • Medium bowl • Sharp knife • Small skillet

Directions

1. Rinse and remove cores from apples. Do not peel. Cut into 1-inch pieces. Place in medium bowl.
2. Add dried fruit and yogurt to bowl. Mix well.
3. In a small skillet over medium heat, toast nuts until golden brown and fragrant. Watch closely so they do not burn. Remove from pan and let cool.
4. Chop cooled nuts with a knife. Or, put in a plastic bag and crush with a can.
5. Add crushed nuts to bowl. If using, add honey. Toss and serve.

Chef's Notes

- Use any kind of apple in this recipe.
- Use any kind of nuts in place of walnuts. Or, omit nuts if someone has an allergy.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ¾ cup (86g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 60 Calories from Fat 15

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 1.5g 2%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 10mg 0%

Total Carbohydrate 13g 4%

Dietary Fiber 2g 8%

Sugars 11g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 6%

Calcium 2% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Peanut Butter and Banana Pockets

Chef Lauren Klatsky • Boston, Mass.

Serves 4, 1 folded (8-inch) quesadilla per serving

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

3 ripe bananas
3 Tablespoons creamy peanut butter
1½ teaspoons honey
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 (8-inch) whole wheat flour tortillas
Non-stick cooking spray

Materials

Large skillet • Measuring spoons
• Rubber spatula • Sharp knife •
Small bowl

Directions

1. Peel and slice bananas about ¼-inch thick.
2. In a small bowl, stir together peanut butter, honey, and cinnamon.
3. Lay tortillas flat. Spread about 1 Tablespoon of the peanut butter mixture on one half of each tortilla.
4. Divide banana slices evenly among tortillas. Arrange in a single layer over peanut butter mixture. Fold each tortilla in half.
5. Coat a large skillet with non-stick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat.
6. Place folded tortillas in the skillet. Cook for 1–2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown.

Chef's Notes

- For a richer flavor, stir 2 Tablespoons of low-fat cream cheese into the peanut butter mixture in step 2. Let cheese come to room temperature before adding.
- To serve as a dessert, add melted chocolate sauce. Or, sprinkle a few chocolate chips inside the quesadilla while cooking.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 folded quesadilla
(163g)

Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 290 Calories from Fat 80

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **12%**

Saturated Fat 1.5g **8%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 340mg **14%**

Total Carbohydrate 50g **17%**

Dietary Fiber 6g **24%**

Sugars 17g

Protein 8g

Vitamin A 2% • Vitamin C 15%

Calcium 15% • Iron 10%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Peanut Butter Hummus

Chef Heidi Brueggeman • Denver, Colo.

Serves 6, ¼ cup per serving

Prep time: 5 min • Cook time: None

Ingredients

1 clove garlic
1 (15½-ounce) can chickpeas
½ cup warm water
4 tablespoons peanut butter
3 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons canola or olive oil
¼ teaspoon salt

Materials

Can opener • Colander •
Measuring cups • Measuring
spoons • Medium bowl • Sharp
knife

Special Materials

Blender

Directions

1. Peel and mince garlic clove.
2. In a colander, drain and rinse chickpeas.
3. In a blender, add garlic, chickpeas, water, peanut butter, lemon juice, oil, and salt. Blend until smooth.
4. Transfer dip to medium bowl for serving.

Chef's Notes

- Serve hummus with whole wheat pita bread and cut vegetables.
- Use any white beans in place of the chickpeas.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/4 cup (66g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 170 **Calories from Fat** 100

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 11g **17%**

Saturated Fat 1.5g **8%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 250mg **10%**

Total Carbohydrate 12g **4%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 1g

Protein 6g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 6%

Calcium 2% • Iron 4%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Pumpkin Chili

Serves 6, 1 cup per serving

Prep time: 5 min • Cook time: 40 min

Ingredients

2 medium zucchini
1 small yellow onion
2 cloves garlic
1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans
2 Tablespoons canola oil
1 (14½-ounce) can diced tomatoes,
no salt added
1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin puree
1 cup water
1 Tablespoon chili powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Materials

Can opener • Colander • Cutting board • Large pot with lid • Measuring cups • Measuring spoons • Mixing spoon • Sharp knife

Directions

1. Rinse zucchini. Peel onion and garlic.
2. Chop zucchini and onion. Mince garlic.
3. In a colander, rinse and drain beans.
4. Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.
5. Add onions. Cook, stirring frequently, until tender, about 5 minutes.
6. Add zucchini. Cook for 3 minutes.
7. Add garlic. Cook for 2 minutes.
8. Add tomatoes and their juices, pumpkin, water, chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper. Bring to a boil.
9. Reduce heat to low. Add beans.
10. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, about 30 minutes. Serve hot.

Chef's Notes

- Try serving with brown rice or whole grain cornbread.
- Use whatever kind of veggies you like or have on hand. Try carrots, celery, spinach, or kale.
- Consider doubling the recipe and freezing some for later.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (303g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 160 **Calories from Fat** 50

%Daily Value*

Total Fat 5g **8%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 500mg **21%**

Total Carbohydrate 23g **8%**

Dietary Fiber 8g **32%**

Sugars 8g

Protein 7g

Vitamin A 190% • Vitamin C 45%

Calcium 6% • Iron 15%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Raspberry-Lime Fizz

Serves 5, 1 cup per serving

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

1 cup cranberry-raspberry juice
4 cups seltzer water
1 large lime

Materials

Cutting board • Measuring cups •
Mixing spoon • Sharp knife

Special Materials

Large pitcher

Directions

1. In a large pitcher, mix cranberry-raspberry juice with seltzer water.
2. Rinse lime and cut in half. Remove seeds. Squeeze juice from each half into the pitcher.
3. Mix well before serving.

Chef's Notes

- Pour over ice and garnish with a lime wedge.
- Replace cranberry-raspberry juice with any 100% juice you prefer.
- For more fruit flavor, increase juice or decrease seltzer water.
- Add thin slices of lemon, lime, or orange for more flavor.
- If you do not have a large pitcher, prepare in a large bowl. Use a measuring cup or ladle to serve.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (212g)
Servings per Recipe 5

Amount Per Serving

Calories 80 **Calories from Fat 0**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 20mg **1%**

Total Carbohydrate 19g **6%**

Dietary Fiber 0g **0%**

Sugars 19g

Protein 0g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 6%

Calcium 0% • Iron 0%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Salmon Pasta Bake

Chef Christine Carroll • Roosevelt Island, N.Y.

Serves 9, 1/9 of recipe per serving

Prep time: 25 minutes • Cook time: 30 minutes

Ingredients

2 cups whole wheat penne pasta
2 medium green onions
1 (14½-ounce) can pink salmon in water
1 cup frozen peas
1 cup nonfat or low-fat plain yogurt
2 teaspoons dried dill or dried parsley
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Materials

9-inch square baking dish • Can opener • Colander • Cutting board • Large bowl • Large pot • Measuring cups • Measuring spoons • Mixing spoon • Sharp knife

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Boil the pasta according to package directions. Drain in a colander. Run under water until cool to the touch, to keep noodles from sticking together.
3. Rinse and finely chop green onions.
4. Drain canned salmon. In a large bowl, mix salmon, pasta, green onions, peas, yogurt, dill or parsley, salt, and black pepper.
5. Transfer pasta mixture to a 9-inch square baking dish.
6. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese over pasta mixture. Bake 25-30 minutes, until bubbling and golden.

Chef's Notes

- Try using 1 (12-ounce) can low-sodium tuna in water instead of the salmon.
- Kick up the flavor by adding a pinch of ground cayenne pepper to the pasta mixture. Or, top with hot sauce when served.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/9 of recipe (116g)
Servings per Recipe 9

Amount Per Serving

Calories 180 Calories from Fat 30

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 3.5g 5%

Saturated Fat 1g 5%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 40mg 13%

Sodium 340mg 14%

Total Carbohydrate 21g 7%

Dietary Fiber 3g 12%

Sugars 3g

Protein 16g

Vitamin A 6% • Vitamin C 6%

Calcium 20% • Iron 8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Southwestern Black-eyed Pea and Corn Salad

Chef Roland Ulber • Denver, Colo.

Serves 10, ¾ cup per serving

Prep time: 20 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

- 1 medium bell pepper
- 1 small red onion
- 2 (15½ ounce) cans black-eyed peas
- 1 (15¼ ounce) can corn kernels, no salt added
- 3 Tablespoons canola oil
- 2 Tablespoons vinegar
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper

Optional Ingredients

- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves

Materials

Can opener • Colander • Cutting board • Large bowl • Measuring spoons • Mixing spoon • Sharp knife

Directions

1. Rinse and dice bell pepper, removing core and seeds. Peel, rinse, and dice onion.
2. If using, rinse and chop cilantro leaves.
3. In a colander, drain and rinse black-eyed peas and corn.
4. In a large bowl, add pepper, onion, peas, corn, cilantro if using, and remaining ingredients. Mix well.

Chef's Notes

- Dried black-eyed peas may be cheaper than canned. If using dried, cook according to package directions until peas are soft but not mushy. Drain, rinse, and add 3 cups cooked peas to salad. Use leftovers in other recipes later in the week.
- Try chilling the salad. Serve it over cooked spinach or kale.
- Use any type of vinegar you have on hand. Try balsamic, cider, or red or white wine vinegar.
- Use black beans in place of black-eyed peas if you like.
- When corn is in season, use fresh in place of canned. Cook 4 medium ears corn. Remove kernels from cob with a knife. Add to salad.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ¾ cup (119g)
Servings per Recipe 10

Amount Per Serving

Calories 100 **Calories from Fat** 40

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4.5g **7%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 280mg **12%**

Total Carbohydrate 14g **5%**

Dietary Fiber 3g **12%**

Sugars 2g

Protein 3g

Vitamin A 2% • Vitamin C 20%

Calcium 2% • Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Spicy White Bean Dip

Serves 6, ¼ cup per serving

Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

2 cloves garlic
1 (15½ ounce) can cannellini beans
⅓ bunch fresh parsley
¼ cup water
1 Tablespoon canola oil
¼ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
Pinch of cayenne pepper

Materials

Can opener • Colander •
Cutting board • Measuring cups
• Measuring spoons • Medium
bowl • Sharp knife

Special Materials

Blender

Directions

1. Peel and mince garlic cloves.
2. Drain and rinse cannellini beans.
3. Rinse and chop parsley.
4. In a blender, add garlic, cannellini beans, water, canola oil, salt, ground black pepper, and cayenne pepper. Blend until smooth.
5. Transfer dip to medium bowl. Top with parsley and stir.

Chef's Notes

- Use ½ teaspoon garlic powder in place of minced fresh garlic cloves.
- Use 2 teaspoons dried parsley in place of chopped fresh parsley.
- Serve with whole wheat pita bread, tortilla chips, or cut-up fresh veggies.
- Use Great Northern or navy beans instead of cannellini beans.
- For a chunkier dip, or to make without a blender, mash beans, oil and water together with a fork until well blended. Stir in rest of ingredients.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ¼ cup (90g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 80 Calories from Fat 20

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 2.5g **4%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 290mg **12%**

Total Carbohydrate 12g **4%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **16%**

Sugars 1g

Protein 5g

Vitamin A 8% • Vitamin C 10%

Calcium 4% • Iron 8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Trail Mix

Serves 8, ½ cup per serving

Prep time: 5 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

- ¾ cup unsalted roasted peanuts
- ⅓ cup raisins
- 1¼ cup crispy whole wheat cereal squares
- 1 cup mini pretzels
- ⅓ cup chocolate chips

Materials

- Large bowl • Measuring cups • Zip-top plastic bag

Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine peanuts, raisins, cereal, pretzels, and chocolate chips.
2. Place in an air-tight container or zip-top plastic bag. Store in a cool, dry place.

Chef's Notes

- Use any of your favorite nuts or dried fruit in place of the peanuts and raisins.
- If peanut allergies are a concern, use almonds or sunflower seeds instead.
- Use any whole grain, low-sugar cereal instead of the crispy whole wheat cereal squares.
- This snack is a great way to add fruit, nuts, and whole grains to your day. However, it can also be high in calories. Pack ½-cup portions.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup (43g)
Servings per Recipe 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 190 **Calories from Fat** 90

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 10g **15%**

Saturated Fat 2.5g **13%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 85mg **4%**

Total Carbohydrate 25g **8%**

Dietary Fiber 3g **12%**

Sugars 11g

Protein 5g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 2% • Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Tomato Salsa

Chef Deborah Kelly • Chicago, Ill.

Serves 6, 1/3 cup per serving

Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: 15 minutes

Ingredients

2 medium jalapeño peppers
1/2 medium red onion
2 cloves garlic
1 Tablespoon cider vinegar
1 (14 1/2 ounce) can diced tomatoes,
no salt added

Optional Ingredients

1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves

Materials

Can opener • Cutting board •
Measuring spoons • Medium pot •
Mixing spoon • Sharp knife

Directions

1. Rinse peppers. Remove seeds and mince.
2. Peel onion and garlic. Rinse onion and dice. Mince garlic.
3. If using, rinse and chop cilantro leaves.
4. In a medium pot, add peppers, garlic, onion, cider vinegar, and canned tomatoes. Heat mixture over medium heat for 15 minutes. Stir occasionally.
5. Chill before serving. If using, add cilantro to chilled salsa.

Chef's Notes

- Use any kind of onions or hot peppers you like.
- For an extra kick, add a third jalapeño or a serrano pepper.
- When in season, use 3 medium or 2 large fresh tomatoes in place of canned.
- Use juice from half a lime in place of cider vinegar if you like.
- Try serving this salsa as a dip with Homemade Corn Tortilla Chips (page 86), as a topping on baked potatoes or tacos, or as a sauce for grilled meats and fish.
- Make a bigger batch and freeze.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/3 cup (87g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 20 **Calories from Fat** 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 0mg **0%**

Sodium 55mg **2%**

Total Carbohydrate 4g **1%**

Dietary Fiber 1g **4%**

Sugars 2g

Protein 1g

Vitamin A 6% • Vitamin C 20%

Calcium 0% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Tuna Boats

Serves 4, ½ cucumber and 6 ounces filling per serving
Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

2 large cucumbers
1 lemon
2 green onions
1 (6-ounce) can low-sodium tuna, packed in water
1 (15 ½-ounce) can white beans
1 Tablespoon canola oil
1 Tablespoon Dijon or country mustard
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

Materials

Box grater • Can opener • Colander • Cutting board • Fork • Measuring spoons • Medium bowl • Sharp knife • Small bowl • Spoon • Vegetable peeler

Directions

1. Rinse cucumbers. Peel off skin every ¼ inch, all the way around. Cut lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds with a small spoon.
2. Rinse lemon. Zest using the small holes of a box grater. Cut in half. In a small bowl, squeeze juice. Discard seeds.
3. Rinse and chop green onions.
4. Drain tuna. In a colander, drain and rinse beans.
5. In a medium bowl, mash beans lightly with a fork.
6. Add green onions, tuna, oil, mustard, salt, pepper, lemon zest, and 2 Tablespoons of the lemon juice to beans. Mix with a fork.
7. Fill each cucumber half with ¼ tuna mixture. Serve.

Chef's Notes

- For a snack or party food, cut cucumbers into thick slices. Do not remove seeds. Place a dollop of tuna mixture on top.
- Add chopped bell pepper or celery for extra nutrition and crunch.
- Try canned salmon, packed in water, instead of tuna.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ½ cucumber and 6 ounces filling (316g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230 **Calories from Fat** 40

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4.5g **7%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 15mg **5%**

Sodium 410mg **17%**

Total Carbohydrate 28g **9%**

Dietary Fiber 7g **28%**

Sugars 3g

Protein 20g

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 15%

Calcium 10% • Iron 25%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Tuna Melt

Chef Carolyn Tesini • Portland, Maine

Serves 4, 1 sandwich per serving

Prep time: 15 minutes • Cook time: 20 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 large or 2 small stalks celery
- 1 large tomato
- ½ medium lemon
- 2 (5- or 6-ounce) cans light tuna, packed in water, no salt added
- 2 ounces low-fat cheddar cheese
- ¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 slices whole wheat sandwich bread

Optional Ingredients

- ¼ teaspoon dried dill or tarragon
- Hot sauce, to taste

Materials

- Box grater • Can opener • Colander
- Cutting board • Fork • Large skillet with lid • Measuring cups • Measuring spoons • Medium bowl
- Sharp knife • Small bowl

Directions

1. Rinse and dice celery. Rinse, core, and cut tomato into 4 thick slices.
2. Rinse lemon and cut in half. In a small bowl, squeeze juice. Discard seeds.
3. In a colander, drain tuna.
4. Grate cheese.
5. In a medium bowl, add tuna. Flake apart with a fork. Add celery, lemon juice, mayonnaise, and black pepper. Mix with fork until combined. If using dried herbs and hot sauce, stir in now.
6. In a large skillet over medium heat, add 2 slices bread. Cook until toasted on bottom, about 5 minutes. Remove from pan. Repeat with other 2 slices. Remove pan from heat.
7. On the toasted side of each bread slice, add ½ cup tuna salad. Top with tomato slice and sprinkle with cheese (about 2 Tablespoons each).
8. Return skillet to medium heat. Place 2 sandwiches in skillet. Cover and cook until cheese is melted and underside is browned, about 3–5 minutes. Remove from pan. Repeat with other 2 sandwiches.



Chef's Notes

- Tuna salad is also great for cold sandwiches. Or, use to make a pasta salad. Combine with leftover whole wheat pasta, a handful of thawed frozen peas, and a little extra low-fat mayonnaise and lemon juice.
- Use diced radishes in place of celery, if you like.
- To make all 4 sandwiches at once, use the oven. Toast bread on a baking sheet at 450°F for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and turn each slice over. Top with tuna salad, tomato slices, and cheese. Return to oven and bake until cheese is melted, about 3–5 minutes.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 sandwich (220g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 270 Calories from Fat 70

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 8g **12%**

Saturated Fat 1.5g **8%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 35mg **12%**

Sodium 390mg **16%**

Total Carbohydrate 19g **6%**

Dietary Fiber 5g **20%**

Sugars 5g

Protein 30g

Vitamin A 10% • Vitamin C 20%

Calcium 25% • Iron 15%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Turkey Tacos

Chef John Haddock • Baltimore, Md.

Serves 8, 2 tacos per serving

Prep time: 20 minutes • Cook time: 25 minutes

Ingredients

1 medium carrot, small sweet potato, or small zucchini
¼ medium head lettuce
2 large tomatoes
7 ounces low-fat cheddar cheese
1 (15½-ounce) can low-sodium pinto beans
Non-stick cooking spray
1 pound lean ground turkey
1 (15½-ounce) can chopped or crushed tomatoes, no salt added
1 Tablespoon chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
16 taco shells

Materials

Box grater • Can opener • Colander • Cutting board • Large skillet • Measuring spoons • Sharp knife • Vegetable peeler

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2 tacos (308g)
Servings per Recipe 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 290 **Calories from Fat** 90

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 10g **15%**

Saturated Fat 3g **15%**

Trans Fat 1.5g

Cholesterol 40mg **13%**

Sodium 500mg **21%**

Total Carbohydrate 28g **9%**

Dietary Fiber 5g **20%**

Sugars 4g

Protein 22g

Vitamin A 20% • Vitamin C 30%

Calcium 15% • Iron 15%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Directions

1. Rinse, peel, and grate carrot, sweet potato, or zucchini (if using zucchini, grate but do not peel). Squeeze dry with paper towels.
2. Rinse and shred lettuce. Rinse, core, and chop tomatoes.
3. Grate cheese.
4. In a colander, drain and rinse beans.
5. Coat a large skillet with non-stick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Add turkey and brown.
6. Add grated veggies, beans, canned tomatoes, chili powder, garlic powder, oregano, salt, and black pepper. Stir well.
7. Reduce heat to medium. Cook until thickened, about 20 minutes.
8. Add 2 Tablespoons cooked meat mixture to each taco shell. Top each with 1 Tablespoon grated cheese, 1 Tablespoon shredded lettuce, and 1 Tablespoon fresh tomatoes.

Chef's Notes

- Top tacos with any of your favorite veggies, hot sauce, salsa, low-fat sour cream, or low-fat plain yogurt.
- Use any type of cooked beans you like.
- Make soft tacos using corn or whole wheat tortillas. Or, serve over brown rice or cornbread.
- For more heat, add minced hot peppers to sauce in step 6.



Yogurt Parfait

Chef Joyce Roland • Seattle, Wash.

Serves 6, 1 parfait per serving

Prep time: 10 minutes • Cook time: None

Ingredients

4 cups fresh or thawed frozen fruit, such as bananas, strawberries, peaches, or mango
3 cups nonfat plain yogurt
1½ cups granola

Optional Ingredients

2 Tablespoons sliced almonds

Materials

6 cups or bowls • Cutting board • Measuring cups • Measuring spoons • Sharp knife

Directions

1. If using fresh fruit, rinse, peel, and/or trim as needed. If using thawed frozen fruit, drain any excess juices. Cut fruit into ¼-inch thick slices. There should be about 3 cups total.
2. Layer ¼ cup yogurt into each of 6 cups or bowls. Top with ¼ cup sliced fruit and 2 Tablespoons granola.
3. Repeat layers one more time, ending with a layer of granola.
4. If using, top with sliced almonds.

Chef's Notes

- Layer parfait just before serving to keep granola crunchy.
- Use any high-fiber cereal you like instead of granola.
- Try topping with rinsed, chopped fresh mint leaves for extra flavor and color.
- To save money, use fresh fruits that are in season. When seasonal fruits are hard to find, use thawed frozen fruit.
- Use leftover fruit in Fruit Smoothies (page 85).
- Use Homemade Granola (page 87).

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 parfait (239g)
Servings per Recipe 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 260 **Calories from Fat** 40

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4.5g **7%**

Saturated Fat 0g **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 5mg **2%**

Sodium 90mg **4%**

Total Carbohydrate 47g **16%**

Dietary Fiber 4g **16%**

Sugars 34g

Protein 9g

Vitamin A 6% • Vitamin C 100%

Calcium 25% • Iron 6%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.



Zucchini Blueberry Pancakes

Serves 4, 2 (4-inch) pancakes per serving

Prep time: 5 min • Cook time: 40 min

Ingredients

2 medium zucchini
3 eggs
½ cup nonfat milk
1 cup whole wheat flour
½ cup quick oats
¼ cup sugar
1 Tablespoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
Non-stick cooking spray
1 cup blueberries, fresh or thawed frozen

Materials

Box grater • Colander • Fork •
Large skillet • Measuring cups •
Measuring spoons • Medium bowl
• Mixing spoon • Paper towels

Directions

1. Rinse and grate zucchini.
2. Place zucchini into a colander. Press firmly with paper towel, removing as much liquid as possible.
3. In a medium bowl, add zucchini, eggs, and milk. Whisk together using a fork.
4. Add whole wheat flour, oats, sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt to the bowl. Mix well.
5. Coat large skillet with non-stick cooking spray. Heat over medium heat for 2 minutes.
6. Spoon ¼ cup of the batter onto the heated pan for each pancake. Sprinkle blueberries on top. Cook until bubbles appear on the top of the batter. Note that this will take longer than for conventional pancakes.
7. Flip and cook until pancake is cooked through and light brown in color.

Chef's Notes

- Top with warmed fruit, peanut butter, yogurt, or warmed honey if you like.
- If using an electric griddle instead of a skillet, preheat to 375°F before using.
- Chop and add 3 Tablespoons of your favorite nuts if no one is allergic to them.
- Make a double batch, cool, and then freeze the cooked leftovers. To prevent the pancakes from sticking together, layer waxed paper between each pancake. Place the stack in an airtight container or zip-top plastic bag. Freeze for no more than 6 weeks. Warm pancakes in a microwave or toaster over for a quick breakfast.
- Add chopped bell pepper or celery for extra nutrition and crunch.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2 (4-inch) pancakes (251g)
Servings per Recipe 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 300 **Calories from Fat** 50

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 6g **9%**

Saturated Fat 1.5g **8%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 140mg **47%**

Sodium 490mg **20%**

Total Carbohydrate 54g **18%**

Dietary Fiber 7g **28%**

Sugars 20g

Protein 12g

Vitamin A 10% • Vitamin C 35%

Calcium 15% • Iron 15%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Detailed Foods To Encourage

The *Detailed Foods to Encourage (F2E)* framework was designed to more accurately evaluate and describe the nutritional contributions of the food categories in food banks' inventories. This framework below serves as the Feeding America national office recommendation, not requirement, for network food banks. Below are the qualifications required for the product categories to be listed within our Foods to Encourage.

Foods must meet all criteria below to qualify. Criteria is based on per serving basis.

Fruits and Vegetables

- Fresh with nothing added
- 100% Fruit or Vegetable Juice
- Canned, Dried or Frozen with no partially hydrogenated oils that meet the criteria below:
 - **Sodium:** $\leq 230\text{mg}^i$
 - **Total Sugar:** Fruit in lite syrup or 100% Juiceⁱⁱⁱ or $\leq 12\text{g}^{iii}$
 - **Sat Fat:** $\leq 2\text{g}^{iv}$
 - **Trans Fat:** 0g

Grains

- 100% whole grain (Rolled Oats, Barley, Wild Rice)
- Bread & Pasta with “whole grain” listed as the first ingredient^v & with:
 - $>10\%$ DV^{vi} or $\geq 2.5\text{g}$ fiber
- Cereal with “whole grain” listed as the first ingredient^{vii} & $>3\text{g}$ of dietary fiber
- Bread, Pasta & Cereal that meet the criteria below:
 - **Sodium:** $\leq 230\text{mg}$
 - **Total Sugar:** Bread/Pasta $\leq 0\text{g}^{viii}$
Cereal $\leq 12\text{g}^{ix}$
 - **Sat Fat:** $\leq 2\text{g}$
 - **Trans Fat:** 0g

Protein

- Eggs
- Nuts, Seeds, Beans and Lentils with nothing added
- Beans, Meat, Poultry and Seafood that meet criteria below:
 - **Sodium** $\leq 480\text{mg}^x$
 - **Sat Fat:** $\leq 2\text{g}^{xi}$
 - **Trans Fat:** 0g
- Nuts/Seeds responding spreads that meet the criteria below:
 - **Sodium:** $\leq 230\text{mg}$
 - **Total Sugar:** $<4\text{g}$ per 2T/1oz^{xii}
 - **Trans Fat:** 0g

Dairy

- Unflavored/Unsweetened low-fat (1%), or skim/non-fat milk or yogurt
- Flavored skim/non-fat milk or yogurt
- Unsweetened milk substitutes (e.g. Soy)
- Cheese that meets the criteria below:
 - **Sodium:** $\leq 480\text{mg}^{xiii}$
 - **Sat Fat:** $\leq 3\text{g}$ | **Trans Fat:** 0g
- Flavored milk, milk substitutes, and yogurt, that meets the criteria below:
 - **Sodium:** $\leq 480\text{mg}^{xiii}$
 - **Total Sugar:** $\leq 22\text{g}(\text{milk}^{xiv})$
 $\leq 30\text{g}(\text{yogurt}^{xv})$
 - **Saturated Fat:** $\leq 3\text{g}$
 - **Trans Fat:** 0g

Resources:

For more information, please visit the following links:

- I. HealthyFoodBankHub.org
- II. Add a widget to your website to provide easy access to healthy recipes:
<http://healthyfoodbankhub.feedingamerica.org/widget-creator/>
- III. Foods to Encourage Background Document:
<http://healthyfoodbankhub.feedingamerica.org/resource/foods-to-encourage-background/>

References

- i. Alliance for a Healthier Generation, Sodium Threshold for a Non-Entrée/Non Meal item not to exceed ≤ 230 mg per serving.
- ii. USDA Food and Nutrition Service Standard for School Lunches
- iii. CFBAI Category Specific Uniform Criteria
- iv. CFBAI Category Specific Uniform Criteria
- v. United States Department of Agriculture and United States Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010
- vi. FDA 10. Appendix B: Additional Requirements for Nutrient Content Claims, 2009 Claim for at least “good source” of dietary fiber | RACC = Relative Amount Customarily Consumed
- vii. United States Department of Agriculture and United States Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010
- viii. CFBAI Category Specific Uniform Criteria
- ix. CFBAI Category Specific Uniform Criteria
- x. Consistent with criteria for “healthy”, CFBAI
- xi. FDA/USDA Lean meat, fish, poultry
- xii. CFBAI Category Specific Uniform Criteria
- xiii. Alliance for a Healthier Generation sodium criteria for low-fat and non-fat dairy products
- xiv. IOM Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier youth
- xv. IOM Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier youth

Meal Ideas from the Food Pantry

Main Food Pantry Items

<i>Canned Fruit</i>	<i>Tomato Sauce</i>
<i>Canned Meat</i>	<i>Cereal</i>
<i>Canned Vegetables</i>	<i>Meat</i>
<i>Canned Soup</i>	<i>Bread</i>
<i>Spaghetti Noodles</i>	<i>Squash</i>
<i>Rice</i>	

MAIN DISHES

Tuna and Rice

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1/4 small onion (optional)
- 1 (14 ounce) can chicken broth-could be substituted for water
- 1 can of green beans-could be substituted with another vegetable
- 1 1/3 cups rice
- 1 teaspoon basil
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 (13 ounce) can tuna-could be substituted with chicken
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes-could be substituted with *diced squash or another vegetable*

Directions:

1. Chop the onion. Drain the tuna. Cut the cherry tomatoes in half.
2. Heat oil in a large skillet. Add onion and cook until tender.
3. Add broth, beans, rice, basil and pepper. Stir to mix well. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer 3 minutes, until almost all liquid is absorbed and beans are tender-crisp.
4. Add tuna and tomatoes to skillet. Stir gently to mix. Cover and cook 1 more minute until heated through.

Goulash

Ingredients:

- 1 pound meat
- 1 package noodles, can be spaghetti, or from a box meal
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can tomato soup
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder-can be garlic salt, but then do not add extra salt
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- Optional onion
- Optional cheese

Directions:

1. Cook noodles as package directs (usually 6-8 minutes in boiling water) drain and set aside

2. Brown meat and onion (optional), then add garlic, salt, pepper cream of mushroom soup and tomato soup, mix well.
3. Add noodles and top with cheese (optional)
4. Cover and heat until cheese is melted
5. This can all be done in one large skillet

Meatloaf

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pounds ground meat
- 1 egg
- 1 onion, chopped(optional)
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup dried bread crumbs, this can be crumbled toast
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons mustard
- 1/3 cup ketchup

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. In a large bowl, combine the beef, egg, onion, milk and bread OR cracker crumbs.
3. In a separate small bowl, combine the brown sugar, mustard and ketchup. Mix into the meatloaf.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste and place in a lightly greased 5x9 inch loaf pan, OR form into a loaf and place in a lightly greased 9x13 inch baking dish. Can add an extra topping of ketchup.
5. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 1 hour.

Hearty Rice Skillet

Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 oz) black, garbanzo, or kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14 oz) diced tomatoes
- 1-2 cans vegetables
- 1 cup water
- 3/4 cup instant brown rice, uncooked
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme (optional/could be substituted for another spice/herb)
- 4-5 dashes bottled hot pepper sauce (optional)
- 1 can (10 oz) condensed tomato soup
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese (optional)

Directions:

1. In a large skillet, stir together beans, tomatoes, vegetables, water, uncooked rice, thyme and hot sauce (if desired).
2. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 12-14 minutes or until rice is tender.
3. Stir in soup; heat through. Before serving sprinkle with cheese.
4. You could also add in *browned hamburger* to put protein into the meal.

Rush Hour Dinner

Ingredients:

- 1 lb ground beef or meat

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 bag frozen mixed vegetables or *can of vegetables*
- 1 jar (26 oz) spaghetti sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 package noodles or rice

Directions:

1. Brown meat and onions in a pan; drain any grease.
2. Add veggies to the pan according to your family's preference; be careful not to overcook.
3. Pour in the spaghetti sauce, and add salt and pepper to your taste.
4. Let simmer about 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until veggies are done. Serve over cooked noodles or rice.

Tuna Chowder

Ingredients:

- 4 slices bacon, sliced into 1/2-inch pieces or *browned burger*
- 1/4 cup diced onion
- Potato-as many as your family calls for
- 1 6-ounce can tuna, drained
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Pinch of black pepper

Directions:

1. In a heavy-bottomed 2-quart soup pot, over medium heat, fry bacon or brown meat.
2. Add onion and potato and cook until onion is soft and just starting to brown.
3. Add just enough water to cover, bring to a simmer and continue cooking until potato is tender and pierces easily with a knife.
4. Stir in tuna and milk. Season with salt and pepper, then reduce heat to low and cook for about 5 minutes, until heated through.
5. You can give this chowder a flavor boost by sautéing chopped celery and carrot with the onion and adding 1/2 teaspoon dried herb such as tarragon, thyme or dill. Then, at serving time, top it with croutons or oyster crackers and a sprinkle of cheddar cheese.

Chicken Pot Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 can mixed vegetables, drained
- 1 can chicken, drained
- 1 can sweet potatoes, or *fresh squash*, chopped into smaller chunks
- 1 can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 tsp oregano (optional)
- 1 1/2 cups complete pancake mix
- 3/4 cup water

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. In a medium bowl, combine mixed vegetables, chicken, drained sweet potatoes (or squash), soup, and oregano (optional). Stir until combined
3. Transfer to ungreased, 9-inch pie plate or 8 x 8 baking dish.

4. Use bowl to combine pancake mix and water. Spread this mixture on top of the chicken mix in the pie plate.
5. Bake for 30 minutes or until the crust is golden brown.
6. You can easily substitute leftover cooked fresh vegetables for the canned vegetables in this recipe.

Squash Risotto

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 medium onion
- 1 *small acorn or butternut squash, peeled, seeded and diced 1/4 inch*
- 2 cups rice
- 1/2 cup white wine (or water)
- 4 cups chicken stock, hot
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
- 1/2 cup parmesan, plus more for sprinkling

Directions

1. In a 12 to 14-inch skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and squash cooking until the onions have softened and are translucent but not browned 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the rice and stir with a wooden spoon until toasted and opaque, 3 to 4 minutes.
3. Add the wine (or water) to the toasting rice, and then add small portion of stock cooking, stirring, until it is absorbed. Continue adding the stock a little at a time, waiting until the liquid is absorbed before adding more.
4. Cook until the rice is tender and creamy and yet still a little al dente, about 15 minutes. Stir in the butter and cheese until well mixed.
5. Serve hot and you can add more parmesan on top.

Chicken Bread Casserole

Ingredients

- 2 cups chicken
- 6 slices bread
- 1/2 cup red onions, chopped (optional)
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped (optional)
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons pimento (optional)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 1/2 cups light cream
 - substitute with one cup whole milk and 3 TBS butter
 - substitute with 3/4 cup whole milk and 3/4 cup evaporated milk
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 3/4 cup shredded cheese

Directions

1. Dice 2 slices of bread and place in bottom of casserole dish.
2. Mix onion, celery, pimento, salt, chicken and mayonnaise. Spoon over bread.
3. Dice 4 slices of bread and place over chicken mixture. Mix cream and eggs and pour over casserole.

4. Place in refrigerator for one hour or overnight. Before baking, spoon mushroom soup over casserole.
5. Bake one hour at 325 degrees. Place cheese on top of casserole for the last 5 minutes of cooking time.

Five Layer Dinner

Ingredients:

- 3 cups cooked noodles
- 1 lb. ground meat
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cans green beans
- 3 cups canned or fresh tomatoes or tomato juice

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375
2. In greased casserole dish spread out half of the cooked noodles
3. Over noodles spread half of the browned meat then half of the thinly sliced onion, then 1 can of beans
4. Season to taste with salt, pepper, etc.
5. Add the other half of each ingredient in same order: noodles, meat, onion, and green beans
6. Pour crushed tomatoes over the entire dish
7. bake for an hour

Chicken and Rice Casserole

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup cupped onions, browned in 1 teaspoon butter/oil
- 2 cups hot cooked rice
- 1 can of chicken, drained and rinsed-could substitute with tuna
- 1 package frozen broccoli partially cooked-could substitute with can of drained vegetables
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Add rice, chicken, broccoli (or other vegetable), and soup to browned onion
3. Pour into baking dish and top with cheese
4. Bake for 23-25 minutes

Ramen Tuna Noodles

Ingredients:

- 2 packages of ramen
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 can drained tuna-can substitute can of chicken
- Shredded cheese (optional)

Directions:

1. Cook ramen noodles, with out seasoning packets
2. Drain and return to pan, add seasoning packets, cheese (optional), mayonnaise and tuna

3. Stir gently until mixed and serve
4. Add crushed pepper if you like it hot or a can of cooked vegetables for a full meal

Beans and Rice

Beans and *rice* can become an easy dinner staple in any home. A package of cooked rice mixed with your choice of beans, black beans, great northern beans, kidney beans, lima beans etc. You can easily add in your choice of any seasoning like rosemary, thyme, or sage or chopped vegetables like onions or peppers to spice things up. Just cook both the beans and rice according to the package and add in any fun extras to enjoy this versatile healthy meal.

Hamburger Pie

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. ground meat
- 1 can corn, drained
- 1 onion
- 8 medium potatoes, cooked and mashed (may use leftovers or instant)

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Sauté hamburger and onion in skillet and drain
3. Put meat and onion mix in large casserole dish
4. Add drained corn on top of the meat mixture.
5. Top with the potatoes and sprinkle with paprika (optional).
6. Bake for 30 minutes.
7. Optional: sprinkle with grated cheese for last five minutes of baking.

Homestyle Potato Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 can chicken broth
- 1 pound potatoes (about 3 medium potatoes), peeled and cut into fourths
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1/4 cup chopped onions

Directions:

1. Heat broth and potatoes to boiling in 3-quart pan, reduce heat.
2. Cover and simmer about 15 minutes until potatoes are tender. Do not drain. Mash potatoes slightly with fork, should still be lumpy.
3. Stir in milk, onions and any desired seasonings. Heat thoroughly but do not boil.
4. Optional: when soup is ready, gradually stir in 1 1/2 cups shredded cheese until melted, and /or add some broccoli.

Easy Venison Stew

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds venison meat
- 1 can (10.75oz) cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can (10.75oz) golden mushroom soup
- 1/2 onion
- 4 large carrots chopped into 1 inch pieces
- One package of pasta or rice

Directions:

1. in a slow cooker combine venison, cream of mushroom soup, golden mushroom soup, onion, and carrots
2. Cover and cook on low setting 6 to 8 hours
3. serve over cooked pasta or rice (cook pasta/rice according to package)

Slow Cooker Venison Sloppy Joes**Ingredients:**

- 2 pounds venison meat
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard (from any bottle/jar)
- 1 cup ketchup
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Combine onion, sugar, cumin, chili powder, mustard, ketchup, salt, and pepper in a slow cooker and mix well
2. Add venison and stir together
3. cook for a minimum of 8 hours on a low setting
4. use a fork to separate meat
5. serve on bread/buns and enjoy ☺

Invent your own Casserole

A casserole consists of six basic ingredients: meat, vegetables, filler, sauce, seasonings, and topping. Example: meat could be *hamburger*, chopped ham, fried and crumbled bacon, or sliced wieners. *Vegetables could be one or two cans* of whatever you have in the pantry. The "filler" helps you stretch the value of the more expensive meat and vegetables. This could be *rice, noodles, potatoes, and macaroni*. Seasonings are whatever you like -- if you have no special favorites, try parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme. A sauce can be melted cheese, or a can of soup (lots of people use cream of mushroom), or a homemade white sauce. For a topping, crumble some crackers and sauté them in melted butter or oil, sprinkle on top. Generally, you cook the meat and the filler before making the casserole.

Party Mac and Cheese

Add a *can of corn, peas, green beans, or any vegetable* into your mac and cheese to give it more flavor and add to the nutritional value. You can also add in some *browned meat or a can of chicken or tuna* and make it the whole meal. Serve it in bowls and call it a "party bowl" to help kids enjoy, with the different colors added from the vegetables it will look like a party in their bowl!

Filling out Tomato Soup

Always try to make your *tomato soup* with milk, instead of water to get the dairy benefits; it will also have a more tick, rich taste. To get a full meal out of a can of tomato soup, try adding in spinach leaves for some green leafy vegetable points. You can also add some *browned hamburger* into your grilled cheese sandwich to get some protein into the meal.

Another different way to make *tomato soup* is to cook in a pan, without adding the milk or water, and instead stir in a tablespoon of Worcestershire sauce and a beaten egg. Heat for several minutes and then add around 8oz of grated cheddar cheese, or maybe sour cream. Stir until melted in and serve over buttered *toasted bread*.

SIDE DISHES

Spicy Apple-Filled Squash

Ingredients:

- 1 Large scorn squash (about 1 LB)
- 1 Cup water
- 2 Teaspoons butter
- 1 Large apple, cored, peeled, and chopped
 - This could be substituted for any other *canned, drained fruit*
- 1 Tablespoon brown sugar
- 1/4 Teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/8 Teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/8 Teaspoon nutmeg

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Cut squash into halves and scoop out seeds.
3. Place squash cut side down, in a 13 x 9 inch baking dish.
4. Add water and bake 35 to 45 minutes or until fork tender.
5. While the squash is baking, cook the rest of the ingredients in a medium saucepan over medium heat for about 8 minutes or until apple is crisp tender.
6. Cut each piece of squash in half and divide the apple mixture equally among the squash wedges.
7. Return squash to oven; bake 10 minutes more or until heated through and serve while hot.

Mashed Turnips

Ingredients:

- Turnips
- Milk
- Butter
- Salt and Pepper

Directions:

1. Peel, wash and quarter turnips
2. boil 35-45 minutes or until tender
3. Strain and rinse cooked turnips
4. Place in large mixing bowl and use fork to break up turnips into smaller bits
5. Add milk and butter and blend to desired consistency
6. Add salt and pepper or any other seasonings to your taste and enjoy ☺

Baked Vegetarian Beans

Ingredients:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup mustard
- 2 cans beans

- ¼ cup flour
- 1 ½ cups/cans evaporated milk

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Mix all ingredients together and pour into greased casserole dish
3. Bake for 40 minutes
4. **You can add in browned meat if not vegetarian

Cream Soup

Ingredients:

- 3 cups water or broth
- 1 cup dry milk powder
- 3 tablespoons flour
- *1 cup cooked vegetables*

Directions:

1. Put water or broth in sauce pan
2. Add in dry milk and flour, mixing in until smooth
3. cook over low heat, constantly stirring, until mixture thickens
4. Add in vegetables
5. Heat thoroughly and serve

Scalloped Veggies

Ingredients:

- *2 cans vegetables*
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- ½ soup can of milk
- *½ dry bread crumbs or crackers*
- Butter

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Put drained vegetables in a greased casserole dish.
3. Add cream of mushroom soup 1/2 soup can milk.
4. Top with 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs or crumbled crackers mixed with melted margarine or butter.
5. Bake for 20 minutes or until crumbs are browned. You can also add some shredded cheese to the top

DESERTS

Fruit Cocktail Pudding Cake

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 beaten egg
- *1 can fruit cocktail*
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Topping

- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup chopped nuts (optional)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Combine dry ingredients in large bowl; sugar, flour, baking soda, salt
3. Add in beaten egg, fruit cocktail, and vanilla
4. Pour into 9x9 baking pan and sprinkle with brown sugar and nuts (optional)
5. Bake for 45 minutes and serve warm or cold

Crunch Cake

Ingredients:

- 3 cups crushed cereal
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 package angle food cake mix

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350
2. Mix crushed cereal and cinnamon
3. Separately prepare cake mix as the box directs
4. Fold in cereal mixture
5. Pour into ungreased Bundt pan and cook and cool as directed on cake mix
6. Serve with fruit topping if desired



ORANGES



CAULIFLOWER



Healthy Foods Here Produce Marketing Guide



What's Inside

- How to Sell Produce
- Helpful Hints
- Resources for Grocers
- Guidelines for Storage & Display
- Special Produce Lists
- Tips & Tricks

DATES



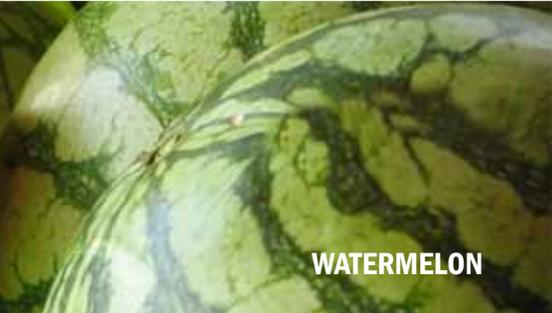
PLANTAIN



SWEET BELL PEPPERS
(RED, ORANGE, YELLOW & GREEN)



CANTALOUPE



WATERMELON



PRODUCE is a common word for FRUITS AND VEGETABLES. Fresh, quality produce is an important part of a healthy diet for everyone in your community.

VEGGIES is a short word for VEGETABLES



BANANA

How to Use Your Produce Kit

- Use the ideas in this book for marketing fruits and vegetables in your store.
- This book and kit help you order, store, display, and promote fresh produce.
- Keep your book in a convenient place where everyone can find it easily.

IN THE BOX:

Box & Lid

Use the box to store tools, or to wash dirty produce before trimming for display. Place a cutting board over the box lid for a temporary work table.

Cutting Board & Knife

(Not included in all kits): Available if your food handler's permit allows you to cut fruits and vegetables. Use the cutting board and knife to trim produce. Trimming produce helps it to last longer on the shelf.

Bar Towels

Use towels often to clean up spills for a safe, healthy workspace.

Sample Plate/Dome Cover & Toothpicks

(Not included in all kits): Cut bite-size pieces of a fruit or vegetable, and arrange on the sample plate. Cover with the dome. Display the sample plate at the counter with toothpicks for customers to use.

Plastic Trays

Use trays to display fresh herbs. Place cut-end of herb sprigs in water, like flowers.

Plastic Bags

Use clear plastic bags to bundle produce for selling in quantity.

Clearance Counter Sign

Display sign at the checkout counter to tell customers about a good deal on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Shelf Tags

Use shelf tags to clearly show NAME AND PRICE.

Mist Bottle

Use the small misting bottle to keep produce fresh daily. Refresh the water throughout the day, and clean all bottle parts at least once a week. (See the Storage & Display Guidelines for a list of produce to mist.)

How to Sell & Market Produce: 1-2-3

1 CONSISTENT ORDERING SCHEDULE

Create a consistent ordering schedule for success with fresh produce.

- Pay attention to how much produce you sell each day/week.
- Watch for seasonal changes in shoppers.
- Write careful notes to keep track of how much you need of each fruit and vegetable.

Order Twice a Week

Produce not selling fast enough? Adjust your ordering schedule to match your customer shopping patterns. For example: instead of one large weekly order, try switching to a two smaller orders scheduled throughout the week, such as Tuesday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday.



2 EARN A GOOD REPUTATION FOR QUALITY

- Entice customers to your produce section with something unique, like a stone fruit.
- Always display quality produce in clean, attractive bins.
- Do not display anything that is not fresh: moldy and overripe produce accelerates the decay of other nearby fruits and vegetables, which can be costly.
- Remove produce with decay, mold, fungus, insects, discoloration, bruises, holes, or bad odor as soon as possible.

Price #2 Produce for Quick Sale

What do you do with slightly bruised or overripe produce? Create a separate #2 area (spaced away from fresh produce displays) where you can sell blemished fruits and vegetables at a markdown. Produce which is no longer fresh but still edible should be bagged up and priced to sell that day.





SAFE FOOD HANDLING

3

- Always store raw meat in a **SEPARATE** refrigerator and away from produce.
- Always store raw eggs and dairy **BELOW** produce in your cooler.
- **CHECK** refrigerator temperatures regularly.



3 Simple Food Safety Practices can prevent almost all foodborne illnesses

- 1) use good personal hygiene and wash your hands often,
- 2) use proper food temperature controls, and
- 3) always prevent cross contamination, especially from raw meats and eggs.

Keep Produce on Top Shelves

If you do not have a separate refrigerator for produce, remember that all raw proteins (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu) **MUST** be stored on shelves **BELOW** fresh produce.

Learn Safe Food Handling Requirements

Protect your customers from foodborne illness. Visit (www.doh.wa.gov) to download the Washington State Food & Beverage Workers' Manual.

**ATTRACT EXISTING &
NEW CUSTOMERS WITH
FRUITS & VEGETABLES
FROM AROUND THE
WORLD**



PAPAYA



COCONUT



STARFRUIT

**PACIFIC
ISLANDS
PRODUCE**

- Bananas (green)
- Breadfruit
- Candlenut/Kukui
- Coconuts*
- Ginger*
- Green Onion/Scallion*
- Macadamia Nuts
- Papaya*
- Peanuts
- Pineapple*
- Seaweed
- Star Fruit
- Taro Root/Kalo
- Yams*

**Most popular choices*

**Maintain Refrigerators
& Freezers to Save
Money \$\$**

Remove the bottom grill and
clean each motor every few
weeks to prolong the life of
your equipment.



WHAT'S IN SEASON: WINTER

December. January. February. March.

- Apples (storage)
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Brussels Sprouts*
- Cabbage*
- Carrots
- Celery
- Grapefruit*
- Kumquats
- Lemons
- Oranges (all varieties)*
- Parsnips
- Pears (storage)
- Pineapples*
- Root Veggies * (parsnips, beets, carrots)
- Tangelos
- Turnips*
- Sweet Squash
- Yams/Sweet Potatoes*

**Best picks of the season*



CARROTS

Seasonal Calendar: Selling Peak Produce Year-Round

Good customer service is priceless.

Your customers will remember a friendly face and a good price for quality produce.

AFRICAN PRODUCE

Bananas
Cabbage
Cilantro
Collards (Summer/Fall)
Corn (Summer)*
Cucumbers (Summer)
Eggplant (Summer)
Mangoes (Spring)
Melons (Summer)
Mustard Greens (Summer/Fall)
Okra (Summer)
Peanuts (Summer/Early Fall)
Peppers (Sweet & Hot in Late Summer)*
Plantain*
Potatoes
Squash (Summer)
Tomatoes (Late Summer)
Yams/Sweet Potatoes (Fall/Winter)*
Yuca/Manioc/Cassava Root*

**Most popular choices*



OKRA



FRESH DATES



WHAT'S IN SEASON: SPRING

March. April. May. June.

Artichokes *
Asparagus (Washington begins in early May)
Leeks
Mangoes
Radish
Rhubarb
Spring Onions
Strawberries (California begins in February)*

**Best picks of the season*



ASPARAGUS



**PRICKLY
PEAR**



TOMATILLO



AVOCADO



LIMES

CENTRAL/SOUTH AMERICAN PRODUCE

Avocados
Cactus Fruit/Prickly Pears
(Summer)*
Cactus Paddles/Nopales
(Spring)*
Calabasas Squash (Fall)
Chayote Squash*
Cilantro
Guava*
Jicama*
Limes
Mangoes (Spring)
Melons (Summer)
Peppers (Sweet & Hot
in Late Summer)*
Plantains/Platanos*
Purslane (Fall)*
Summer Squash (Zucchini,
Grey, Yellow thru Summer)*
Tomatillos*
Tomatoes (Summer)
Yuca/Manioc/Cassava Root*

**Most popular choices*



WHAT'S IN SEASON: SUMMER

June. July. August. September.

Apricots*
Beans, Green
Beets (July thru October)
Berries (Washington Strawberries begin in June,
Raspberries/Blackberries/Blueberries in July)*
Broccoli
Cabbage
Cauliflower
Carrots
Cherries (late June thru July)*
Collards (September thru October)
Corn (August thru September)*
Cucumbers
Eggplants (August thru September)*
Garlic (new crop begins in August)
Grapes (California new crop begins in July)*
Leeks
Lettuces
Melons (all varieties)*
Nectarines*
Onions
Peaches*
Peanuts (local)
Peas (English, Fava, Sugar Snap, Snow)
Peppers (Sweet & Hot varieties begin in August)*
Plums/Plutots*
Potatoes (begin in August/ September)
Spinach (bunched)
Summer Squash (Yellow, Zucchini, Grey)*
Tomatoes (local begins in late August/September)*



BROCCOLI

**Best picks of the season*

ASIAN PRODUCE

Asian pears (Fall)
Asparagus (Spring)
Bean Sprouts
Bitter Melon (Fall)*
Bok Choy
Burdock/Gobo (Spring)*
Cabbage, Napa (Summer)
Chestnuts (Fall)*
Chinese Broccoli/Gai Lon
(Summer)*
Chinese Long Beans
(Spring/Summer)*
Choy Sum
Daikon
Durian
Eggplant (Thai, Japanese,
Chinese thru Summer)
Ginger
Kumquats (Winter)
Mandarin Oranges (Fall/Winter)*
Mangoes (Spring)*
Oro Blanco Grapefruit (Winter)*
Persimmons (Fall)*
Quince (Fall)*
Snow peas (Summer)
Winter Melons*
Winter Squash (Butternut,
Delicata, Kabocha, Acorn)*

**Most popular choices*



WHAT'S IN SEASON: AUTUMN/FALL

September. October. November. December.

Apples*
Asian pears*
Artichokes
Beans, Green*
Brussels Sprouts
Cauliflower*
Celery*
Chards/Kales/Collards (local thru November)
Cranberries*
Mandarin Oranges*
Nuts
Parsnips
Pears*
Persimmons
Pomegranates
Pumpkins*
Quince
Turnips
Winter Squash (Butternut, Delicata, Kabocha, Acorn)*
Yams/Sweet Potatoes*

**Best picks of the season*



Ordering & Marketing Produce

START WITH POPULAR FRUITS/VEGETABLES

If you do not know which items to sell, start with easy staples. For example: bananas, cabbage, iceberg lettuce, potatoes, peppers, carrots, and onions are popular choices.

Choose one special fruit to make your selection unique.

For example: in winter, offer California strawberries or Chilean fruits like peaches, mangoes, or plantain.



ADJUST YOUR ORDERING SCHEDULE

- **Order twice a week**, smaller amounts to keep fresh
- Use an order guide to **record what you order**
- Call in orders by **the day before delivery**
- Try to keep a **consistent delivery schedule**

CHECKLIST FOR RECEIVING PRODUCE

- ✓ **Check all produce quality** before you pay
- ✓ **Send back bad produce** with your delivery driver or call your wholesaler representative
- ✓ **Refrigerate produce immediately** as needed
- ✓ Remember to **rotate old produce forward** to sell first



REJECT ROTTEN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Always reject bad cases of produce. If you discover a bad case, call your wholesaler representative immediately. **You must call within 24 hours to send back a bad case and receive a credit.**

If you do not like a case for any reason, always send it back. Do not worry if you seem to send a lot of cases back, as it helps your wholesaler learn to give you fresher, better quality produce.

Offer Unique Varieties of Favorite Produce

Surprise and entice your customers with unique varieties of popular fruits and vegetables. For example: try Fuji or Braeburn instead of Red Delicious **apples**, or grapefruits and tangerines instead of **oranges**, or romaine instead of iceberg **lettuce**.

One rotten apple will spread and ruin the case.

This is true for any fruit or vegetable. Remove rotten items as soon as they are discovered, and immediately inspect the entire case for other decay.

Hints for Displaying Produce



SEPARATE Fruits & Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables should always be stored and displayed separately wherever possible. Potatoes, onions, and garlic should be kept separate from all fruits (including tomatoes and peppers). Apples and pears should be stored separately from peaches, citrus, or bananas. Bananas and citrus should also be kept separate from each other.

For more variety, try ordering a half-case or a “broken pack” instead of a full case.

For example: 12 cucumbers, 3 pineapples, or 5 pounds of limes. The cost may be a little higher for a broken pack, but it may be a better choice than losing part of a case that does not sell.

HOW TO ROTATE PRODUCE

First In, First Out (F.I.F.O): Cases should be used in the order they are received. Always stock displays from your oldest cases first, so your oldest produce is sold out first. Display the oldest produce on top in each display. Rotate fruits and vegetables daily for best quality and success.

Take Regular Notes: Record deliveries in your order guide, and/or write the delivery date on every box of fresh produce, so you always remember which produce to sell first.

No Rotten Apples: Remove produce with decay, mold, fungus, insects, discoloration, bruises, holes, or bad odor. Remember: rot can spread quickly to neighboring produce.

Remove Overripe Produce Immediately: Moldy and overripe produce accelerates the decay of other nearby fruits and vegetables. Remove damaged produce as soon as possible.



Throw Out Damaged Produce: Discard cut/peeled produce with damaged packaging.

Compost Rotten Produce: Use a compost bin to recycle trimmings and spoiled produce for use in the garden. (www.seattle.gov/binsandbarrels/)

USE SAFE FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES



Wash Your Hands often when working with fresh produce. Always wash produce before cutting and preparing.

Keep Produce SEPARATE from Raw Meats: Always separate fresh produce displays from all raw meats, poultry, fish, and eggs. Produce must be stored/displayed ABOVE all raw proteins for proper food safety.

Keep All Displays Clean: Regularly clean display areas, countertops, shelves, and equipment. Remove all produce from each display area before cleaning. Use a solution of 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach to 1 quart water. Cloths used to clean up food spills should not be used for any other purpose.

Always refrigerate cantaloupe and honeydew melon to prevent the risk of foodborne illness. Whenever possible display these melons on a bed of chipped ice.

Always refrigerate broccoli to prevent the risk of foodborne illness. Whenever possible, display broccoli on a bed of chipped ice.



CANTALOUPE

RED POTATOES

Merchandising & Display Tips

Pile, But Not Too High: Display produce in attractive piles or stacks. Make sure air can circulate (do not stack too thick). Delicate produce should not be stacked more than 2 or 3 layers. For refrigerated items be careful that the top stack of produce is not exposed to warm air.

Keep Displays Full: Pile lots of fruit in small baskets to emphasize abundance. Refill empty displays as soon as possible.



Display in Baskets: Display produce in simple baskets. Wire and wicker baskets look nice and are easy to clean.

Display at Checkout: For faster sales, display fresh produce at the front of the store or checkout counter.

Keep Citrus Cold: Keep limes, lemons, oranges, and other citrus fruits in the refrigerator for best freshness.

Keep Off the Floor: Keep fresh produce at least 6 inches above the floor.

Use Clear Signage: Use colorful promotion signs to direct customers to fresh produce.

Handle Produce with Care: Fresh produce is delicate! Be as gentle as possible when handling your produce to avoid bruising or scarring. Whole (uncut) produce does not need to be washed before being sold.

Display a Few at a Time: Try displaying just a few items at a time, and refill baskets often. Display fruits and veggies piled high in small quantities.

Do NOT Refrigerate Bananas or Tomatoes: Always store bananas and tomatoes stem-side down. Never store bananas or tomatoes in the refrigerator, and handle all fruits gently to prevent bruising.

Ripen Stone Fruit: Ripen avocados and stone fruits (peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots, etc.) a few at a time at room temperature in small batches. Return counter-ripened fruits to the refrigerator to prevent spoilage.



Use Clear Bags in Refrigerators

Clear plastic bags will help preserve or extend the life of lettuce and other refrigerated vegetables. Bag in small quantities at reasonable prices.

Bag in Quantity for Quick Sales

Keep produce moving with bags of quantity in the refrigerator. Use clear plastic bags in family-sized quantities. For example: 6 limes per bag, 3 lemons per bag, or 6 oranges per bag.



How to Store & Display for Success



REFERENCE PRODUCE GUIDE

For detailed information about each fruit and vegetable, please refer to the Healthy Foods Here Fresh Produce Guide.



REFRIGERATE LIKE FLOWERS: PLACE STEMS IN 1 INCH OF WATER

Asparagus
Herbs
(Mint, Cilantro, Parsley, etc.)
Rapini



REFRIGERATE THESE FRUITS

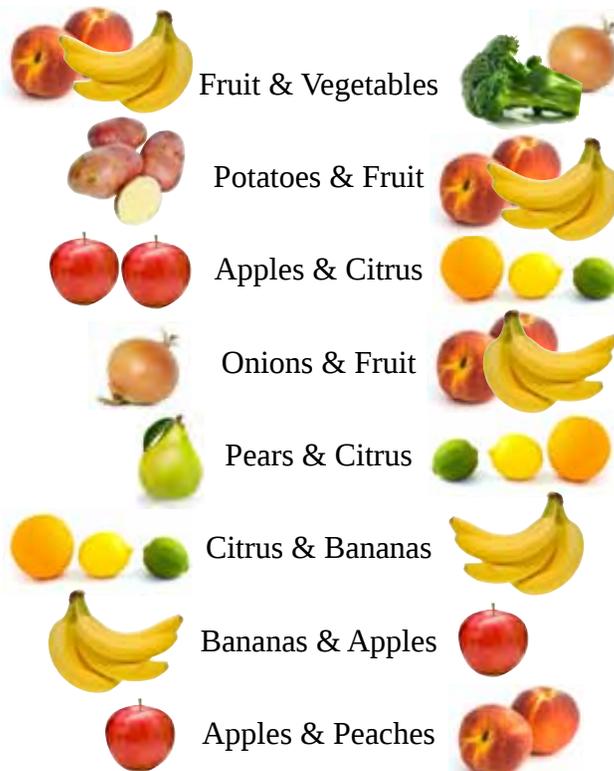
Apples
Apricots
Berries
Cactus Fruit/Prickly
Pears
Cantaloupe
Cherries
Grapes
Grapefruit
Honeydew
Kiwi
Lemons
Limes
Nectarines*
Oranges
Peaches*
Pears
Peppers
Plums*
Summer Squash
Zucchini



MIST FREQUENTLY

Asparagus
(keep tips dry)
Broccoli
Cabbage
Carrots
Celery
Corn
(very important)
Green Onions
Greens (Kale, Chard, Spinach, Collards, Parsley, Mustard, Bok Choy)
Lettuce
Parsley
Red Potatoes
Root Vegetables
(Beets, Rutabagas, Turnips, Parsnips)
Scallions
Summer Squash
Zucchini

DO NOT STORE OR DISPLAY TOGETHER



**take small amounts out of refrigeration to ripen as needed*



More Storage & Display Tips



TRIM AS NEEDED & TURN OFTEN

Beets, Turnips,
Rutabagas (tops)
Broccoli and
Rapini (stems)
Cabbage
(wilted leaves)
Carrots (tops)
Celery (tops)
Greens –
Kales, Chards,
Mustard, Collards
(tips of stalks)
Lettuce (outer leaves
and bottom)
Scallions/Green
Onions (tops)



FOR BEST RESULTS: REFRIGERATE IN CLEAR PLASTIC BAGS

Cabbage
Carrots
Celery
Greens (Kale, Chard,
Spinach, Collards,
Parsley, Mustard,
Bok Choy)
Lettuce
Summer Squash
Zucchini



DISPLAY ON CHIPPED ICE

Beets
Broccoli
Cantaloupes
Carrots
Cauliflower
Cut Samples
Kale
Chards
Collards
Mustards
Rapini



REFRIGERATE THESE VEGETABLES

Asparagus
Beets
Broccoli
Cabbage (all)
Cactus Paddles
(Nopales)
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Corn
Greens (Kale, Chard,
Spinach, Collards,
Parsley, Mustard,
Bok Choy)
Green Beans
Leeks
Lettuce
Mushrooms
Radishes/Daikon
Red Potatoes
Scallions
Turnips
Rutabagas
Parsnips

DO NOT REFRIGERATE: KEEP COOL & AWAY FROM DIRECT LIGHT



Avocado**
Bananas
Basil (store in
clear plastic bags)
Cucumbers
Eggplants
Garlic*
Ginger
Jicama
Mangoes
Okra

Onions*
Papaya
Persimmons
Pineapple
Plantains
Pomegranates
Pumpkins
Russet Potatoes*
(discard if green,
soft or sprouting)
Taro Root

Tomatillos
Tomatoes
Winter Squash
Watermelons
Yams/Sweet
Potatoes

**discard if sprouting*
*** Refrigerate
to slow ripening*

Hints for Promoting Produce

ATTRACT SHOPPERS WITH A LOSS LEADER

If produce sales are slow, try using a “loss leader.” A loss leader is a popular product sold at a big discount to attract shoppers. The goal of using a loss leader is to **get shoppers in the door to buy other products.**

Choose a popular fruit or vegetable leader for your neighborhood, such as plantain or avocados. Price the leader(s) at cost, and display in large quantities with either: 1) a cart/basket placed right outside your door (weather permitting), or 2) a bountiful display placed the middle of your store.



Offer a Really Good Deal

Customers appreciate a “good deal.” A good deal is a popular product sold at an affordable price (especially if the product is of high quality, and/or the price is lower than other stores offer). If you sell a popular fruit or vegetable at cost, you will not make a profit but your customers will remember, “I got a really good deal at this market, so I should go back and shop again.”

Watch the Habits of your Customers

Pay close attention to your customers’ buying habits and take careful notes. Watch what people buy, when they buy, and in what quantities. Use the ideas in this kit to adjust your orders for the best produce sales results.



GENERAL PROMOTION TIPS

Display Produce Where Customers Walk: Choose high-traffic areas for your healthy foods sections.

Use Signage to Direct Customers to Produce Displays: Display signs outside your store to bring people in the door. Use signs throughout the inside of your store to help customers find your healthy food displays.

Help Customers Enjoy Produce: Offer free recipe cards or nutritional information to help customers enjoy more fresh produce.

Display Your Best Produce Near Checkout: Display the freshest-looking fruits and vegetables up front to attract customers. Remember: No bruises. No mold.

Use Clear Price Tags: Use clear, easy-to-read price tags with affordable prices.

Talk to People: If you want to know what your customers want, ask them. During a friendly conversation, ask your shoppers: “What are your favorite fruits and vegetables?” or “Is there a fruit or vegetable that you want that I do not have yet?”

Be Friendly: Customers remember good service.

11 Marketing Tips for Better Produce Sales



ONIONS



Pile High: create a big display in a small basket/bin.

Keep Area Clean Daily: displays, glass doors, shelves, baskets, bins

Feature Seasonal Produce: consult the lists in this kit



Offer Cut Samples of Seasonal Fruit: try berries or orange wedges at checkout (only if you have the correct health permits)

Put At Least One Item on Sale: people love a good deal



Remove Old Produce Daily: earn a reputation for quality

Trim as Needed: especially lettuce, cabbages, beets, carrots, turnips



Mist as Needed: especially corn, greens, lettuce, root veggies

Display Healthy Foods Here Sign Outside: help people choose healthy foods

Display Proper Tags: clearly mark the name and price, no surprises at checkout

Cross Merchandise: place 2 or 3 items that “go together” near to each other



WATERMELON



Holiday & Seasonal Produce Promotions

JANUARY

Tropical Fruits
or Specialty Apples for
Fitness & Healthy Eating

FEBRUARY

Strawberries for Valentines
Day, or Green Papaya for
Lunar New Year

MARCH

Cabbage for St. Patrick's
Day, or Spring Greens for
National Nutrition Month



APRIL

Asparagus or Green
Beans for Spring

MAY

Avocados or Jalapenos
for Cinco de Mayo



JUNE

Local Produce
and Salmon for the Best
of Seattle In-Season

JULY

Cherries and Barbeque
for 4th of July
Independence Day

AUGUST

Stone Fruits, or Apples
and Pears for Canning
the Abundant Harvests

SEPTEMBER

Bananas, Grapes,
Mandarins,
or Persimmons
for Easy
Back-to-School
Snacks



OCTOBER

Plums, Pomegranates,
Purple Yams, or Squash
(Pumpkin, Zucchini, Acorn,
Butternut, Spaghetti)
for Halloween



NOVEMBER

Cranberries, or Yams
and Potatoes (Reds, Russets,
Golds) for Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

Artichokes, Nuts, or
Winter Squash for Holidays
and the New Year

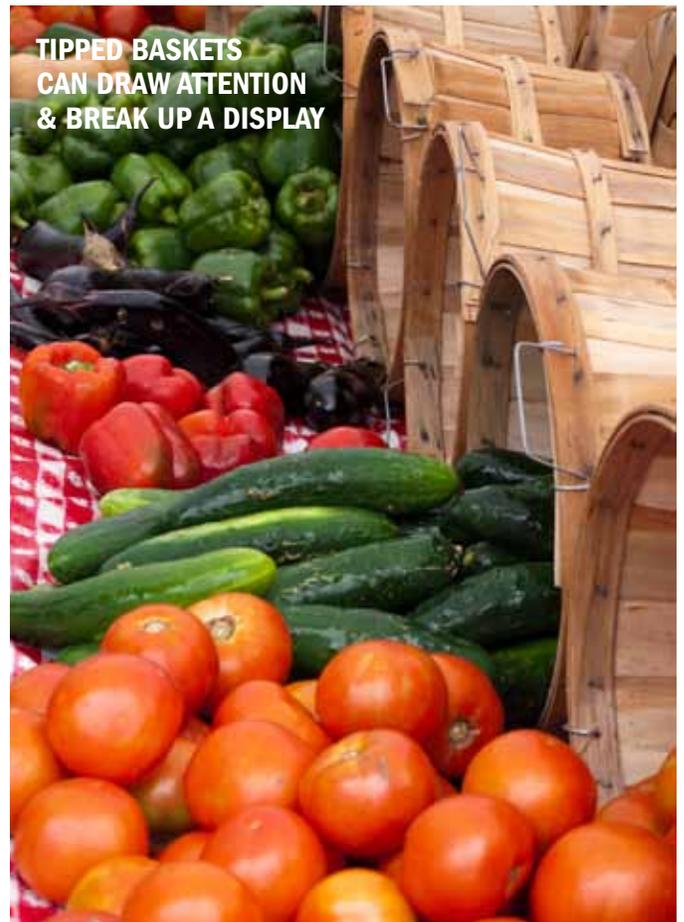
AVOCADO



WATERMELON



Ways to Display Produce



Writing on Price Tags

SAMPLE SIGN SUGGESTIONS

Fresh Asparagus Grown in Yakima!
99¢ lb.

Tree-Ripened Gala Apples In-Season!
\$1.27 lb.

Priced to Sell: Tomatoes \$5.00 box
Great for making Spaghetti Sauce

Overripe Bananas \$1.00 bag
Use in Pancakes, Smoothies or Bread

Juicy Oranges Sweet & Delicious
50¢ each

Just in Time for your St. Patrick's Day Celebrations
Green Cabbage \$2.69 ea.

Special Price Today: **Sweet Carrots**
\$1.00 bunch



Recipes Inspire Consumers to Try New Produce

HEALTHY RECIPES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthy Recipe Links
www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/recipes.html

Easy-To-Fix Healthy Meals

www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/nutrition/easyfix.aspx

Fruits and Veggies More Matters

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org

King County Public Health Recipe Cookbook

www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/nutrition/recipes.aspx

Let's Move!: 42 Healthy and Kid-Friendly Recipes to Try at Home

www.letsmove.gov/blog/2012/02/09/42-healthy-and-kid-friendly-recipes-try-home

USDA SNAP-Ed: Recipe Finder

recipefinder.nal.usda.gov

Personal Notes

MY PRODUCE REP IS:

I NEED TO ORDER BY:

PRODUCE MY CUSTOMERS SEEM TO REALLY LIKE:

THINGS I WANT TO REMEMBER:

Chard, Apple & Cherry Salad

Ingredients

- 1 Swiss Chard head, rinsed & torn
- 1 Red Apple, rinsed & chopped
- 1 cup Dried Sweet Cherries, chopped
- 2 Tbsp Sesame Seeds, soaked for 2 hours
- 1 Garlic clove, peeled & minced
- 2 Lemons, juiced
- 1 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 tsp Apple Cider Vinegar
- Pinch Salt
- 1 Avocado, sliced
- 4 Chinese Shallots, chopped

Preparation

1. Toss chard in a bowl and rub with salt.
2. Combine cherries, sesame seeds, oil, lemon juice, and vinegar.
3. Combine cherry mixture with chard, mix and press well to wilt.
4. Let stand for 20 minutes, then press in half the avocado.
5. Add chopped apples and toss.
6. Top with other half of the avocado, serve and enjoy.

Mildly sweet and slightly bitter green. Cook like spinach, wilt in soups, or enjoy fresh in salads. Swiss Chard is high in vitamin A and C and high in iron.

Rose D. (Evergreen Campus) thought you might like this recipe.

GLOBALLY DELICIOUS PRODUCE

Thank You!

Thank you for participating in Healthy Foods Here.

Healthy Foods Here was created to help people find fresh foods in neighborhoods throughout South Seattle and South King County.

Stores like yours are fast becoming an important source of fresh, healthy foods for people who live, work, and play in your neighborhood.

You and other participants in the Healthy Foods Here program have received tools like this book to help you develop profitable sales of healthy food in your store.

Remember: Healthy Foods Here was just the first step. We hope you will use these resources and continue to expand your sales of fresh and healthy foods in our neighborhoods.

Thank you for caring about your community.



www.healthyfoodshere.com

Made possible by funding from Public Health - Seattle & King County and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Turn & Trim Daily

Trim carrots, beets, cabbages, lettuce, and other vegetables as soon as you receive them. Trim again as needed and mist these vegetables often. For best results, regularly turn all cabbages, root vegetables, leafy greens, and other produce.

Keep Sensitive Produce Cool But Do NOT Refrigerate

Cucumbers, tomatoes, mangoes, and basil should never be refrigerated or they will become mushy and rot. Instead, store and display these items on cool shelves or counters, away from direct light.



BARTLETT PEAR

Content created by Sumitra Rosella
Designed & produced by Noise w/o Sound
Written by Jade Leone Blackwater, Brainripples





Cross-Merchandising: Tips for a Food Shelf

What is Cross-Merchandising?

Cross Merchandising involves setting up a display of grocery items that complement one another but are found in separate grocery departments. The goal is to encourage individuals to select all of the items by demonstrating how they go together.

Why is Cross-Merchandising Important in a Food Shelf?

Cross-merchandising can be a powerful tool for inspiring individuals to try new and unfamiliar fruits and vegetables. With visually appealing displays, signage, and recipes, Cross-merchandising displays may:

- Impact future desire for fresh produce
- Make it easier for people to make healthy meals with fresh produce
- Educate people on various ways to prepare and consume produce

Cross-Merchandising with MyPlate

Cross-merchandising can be helpful in promoting fresh produce. It can also help to encourage balanced meals and snacks by using MyPlate as a guide. MyPlate consists of five different food groups including proteins, fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy. In your cross-merchandising display, create healthy snacks that include **at least two** food groups and healthy meals that include **at least three** food groups. Below are some formulas that can help you to create a healthy meal or snack to cross-merchandise. Look to the side column for ideas on what foods are in each food group.

Healthy Snack =
 Vegetable + Protein
 Fruit + Protein
 Dairy + Fruit

Healthy Meal =
 Vegetable + Protein + Grain
 Protein + Dairy + Vegetable
 Dairy + Vegetable + Fruit
 Grain + Fruit + Dairy
 Fruit + Protein + Vegetable

MyPlate Food Groups

Proteins

Meats & poultry
 Eggs
 Canned meats
 Beans/lentils
 Nuts/nut butters

Fruits

Fresh, frozen, & canned
 Dried fruits
 100% fruit juices

Vegetables

Fresh, frozen, & canned
 100% veggie juices

Grains

Brown or wild rice
 Whole grain bread
 Whole wheat pasta

Dairy

Milk & yogurt
 Cheese

List of Cross-Merchandising Ideas

Below are some examples of how you can cross-merchandise your foods. It is helpful to provide recipes using all of the ingredients being placed together.

HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS			
Tuna Salad		Fruit Smoothie	
Canned tuna	Protein	Banana	Fruit
Celery	Vegetable	Peach	Fruit
Cucumber	Vegetable	Yogurt	Dairy
Apple & Cabbage Slaw		Veggies and Ranch Dip	
Cabbage	Vegetable	Broccoli	Vegetable
Carrots	Vegetable	Plain yogurt	Dairy
Apples	Fruit	Ranch season	N/A
Peanut Butter Apples		Veggies and Hummus	
Apple	Fruit	Carrot	Vegetable
Peanut butter	Protein	Hummus	Protein
Fruit and Veggie Smoothie		Vegetable Bean Salad	
Banana	Fruit	Black beans	Protein
Spinach	Vegetable	Pinto Beans	Protein
Peanut butter	Protein	Cucumber	Vegetable
Yogurt	Dairy	Bell Pepper	Vegetable

HEALTHY MEAL IDEAS			
Chicken Salad Sandwich		Beef & Potato Skillet	
Canned chicken	Protein	Potatoes	Vegetable
Celery	Vegetable	Spinach	Vegetable
Grapes	Fruit	Cheese	Dairy
Wheat bread	Grain	Beef	Protein
Vegetarian Quesadillas		Bean Chili with Raisins	
Beans	Protein	Tomato sauce	Vegetable
Bell peppers	Vegetable	Beans	Protein
Cheese	Dairy	Wheat pasta	Grain
Tortillas	Grain	Raisins	Fruit
Pasta with Red Sauce		Fruit Pancakes with Nut Butter	
Chicken	Protein	Pancake mix	Grain
Canned tomatoes	Vegetable	Strawberries	Fruit
Onion	Vegetable	Peanut butter	Protein
Wheat pasta	Grain	(or syrup)	(N/A)
Turkey Noodle Soup		Chicken Stir Fry	
Turkey	Protein	Broccoli	Vegetable
Elbow macaroni	Grain	Lemon	Fruit
Carrots	Vegetable	Chicken	Protein
Celery	Vegetable	Brown rice	Grain

Questions to ask before you start

LOCATION

Where is the best area to set up the display?

Should it be in the produce area or in another section?

Where is the display most likely to be seen?

PLANNING DISPLAYS

How often will you change your displays?

Who will create and maintain displays?

Will your volunteers be involved with this?

PROMOTION

Do you have signage to show that these items go together?

Do you have a catchy theme to promote the items?

Example:
TRY a breakfast theme. Display milk, cereal, and bananas along with a sign or banner that states, "Start your Day Right with Breakfast".



Merchandising & Stocking Basics and Checklist

Understanding Merchandising

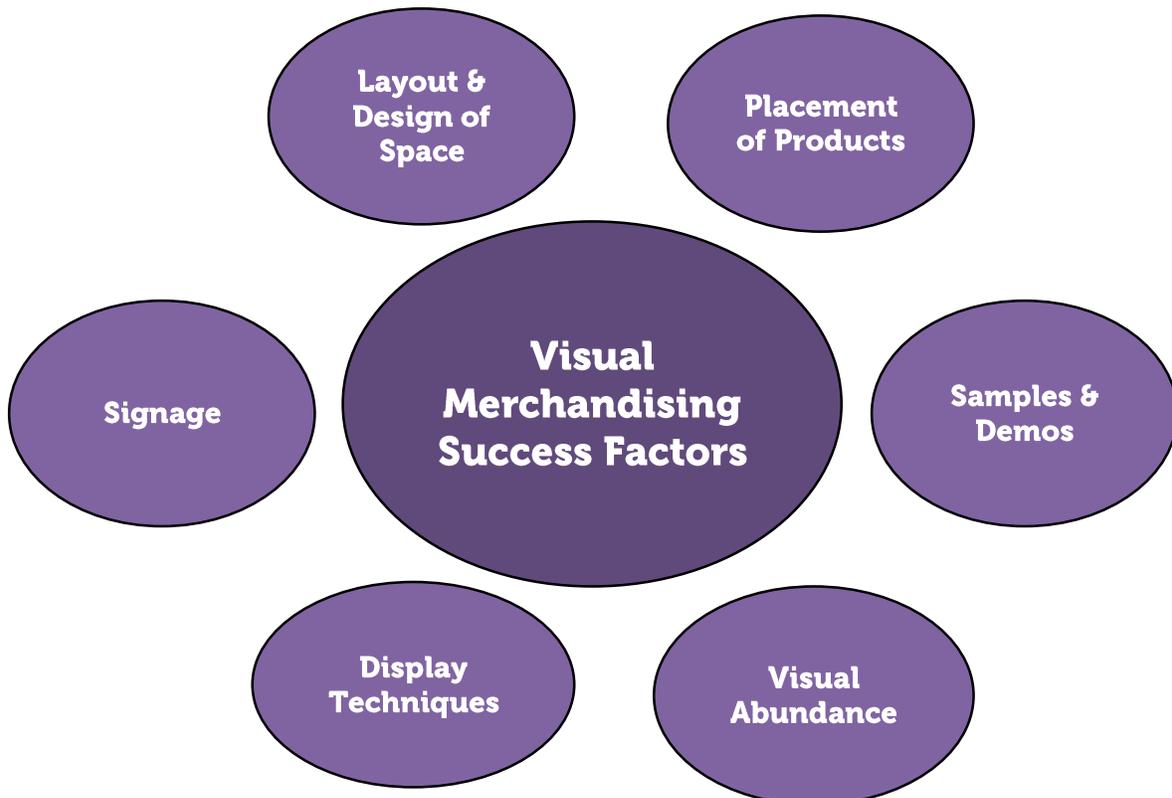
○ **What is Merchandising?**

Merchandising is a marketing strategy to promote and increase the sale of goods.

Merchandising has a significant impact on whether or not a customer chooses specific items by influencing their emotions about the items displayed.

○ **How & Why at a Food Shelf?**

Merchandising is usually a strategy used in retail. However, this concept can be applicable at food shelves to increase the demand and distribution of targeted foods. Below are some applicable and basic merchandising strategies to consider implementing at your food shelf, specifically to increase the demand for fresh produce and healthy foods.



Merchandising Basics

Merchandising has a huge impact on whether or not a customer chooses a specific item by influencing their emotions about the items displayed. Below are some basic merchandising strategies to consider:

- **Size**

Create displays that are the appropriate size for a given item. It can lead to more effective and less labor-intensive stocking. For example, create a large display of bananas or oranges and smaller displays of lemons or limes.

- **Placement**

Where you place items can have a subtle impact on whether individuals take an item. There are a couple of ways to take advantage of this merchandising concept. First, place more exotic or slow moving items, such as kale or kohlrabi, among staple items, such as lettuce and carrots to increase their visibility and appeal.



Secondly, in the grocery stores, shelves that sit at eye level, known as “reach”, usually contain products that are competitive, have a high impulse-purchase rate, or are most appealing to the customers. Therefore, use this strategy to promote the selection of healthier foods by placing the items at eye level. Also, think about the general layout of your food shelf and how you can set-up your shelving and displays to promote healthy and fresh foods in high traffic areas.

Place Items
You're Trying
to Promote at
Eye Level



○ **Categorizing**

This is the process of sorting items by “categories” of produce, such as fruits with fruits and vegetables with vegetables. You may sort produce beyond the categories of fruits and vegetables. For instance, fruits can be further categorized by type; such as pomes (apples, pears, etc.), citrus (oranges, lemons, limes, etc.) and pit fruits (peaches, plums, etc.).



○ **Abundance**

Create and maintain displays that appear full and abundant, even if stock is running low. This can be achieved through the following techniques of fronting and consolidating.



○ **Fronting Displays**

Fronting, also referred to as “facing”, is the practice of moving items in a display that has been shopped from the back of the shelf to the front of the shelf in order to make it appear more full and abundant to a customer. Displays that are fronted create a greater sense of abundance and encourage customers to select an item.



○ **Consolidating**

Consolidating items can have the same impact as fronting. It can make a shopped or empty looking display appear more full and attractive. This can include consolidating a display of one item into a smaller, closer space or consolidating two different items into the same display or area to make them appear more full and abundant.



○ **Display Maintenance**

Maintaining displays can impact whether or not individuals are drawn to or choose certain items. Keep displays clean, organized, appealing, and abundant. Remove any items that have mold or are deteriorating.

BEFORE



AFTER



○ **Signage**

Signage, in the form of posters and product specific information, can guide customers to healthier choices and help them learn more about good nutrition.



○ **Cross Merchandising**

Create a display of unrelated types of grocery items where customers can select all of the items with the intent to using them together. Displays can be creative and impact individual habits by inspiring them to try something new or to prepare a recipe that is provided. An example is when you see bananas in the cereal aisle at the grocery store. In a food shelf, choose items that might go together for a meal or a snack and make displays simple and convenient for individuals.



Try displaying signage that states “We Go Together” to help inform individuals that there is a purpose for these items. Adding a recipe handout will also enhance the likelihood of individuals trying all of these items displayed together.



Stocking Basics

These basic stocking procedures ensure quality and consistency in produce being stocked and should be followed each time produce is stocked.

- **Handling**

Handle or “touch” produce as little as possible. Waiting to stock an item until you can fit out a reasonable amount of the item, such as half of a case or more, so that you are not constantly stocking the same items over and over again. This practice ensures that you can stock items that need the most attention and don’t waste time stocking items that don’t need to be stocked.

- **Sorting**

Sorting incoming produce ensures standards of quality. When receiving produce, all items should be checked for damaged or decaying product. All damaged or decaying items should be removed and properly disposed.

- **Rotating**

Good rotation is another way to ensure quality and be sure any product that had been damaged or decayed on the shelf is found and removed. After all incoming produce is sorted, it should be rotated with product that is already on the shelf. This includes removing items already on the shelf, stocking new items in the back or bottom of a display and restocking the older items on top or in front of the incoming stock. This practice is commonly referred to as first in, first out or “FIFO”.

- **Culling**

Culling is the practice of removing any damaged or decaying items from the shelves. This practice can be incorporated with rotating product during stocking, or as a separate practice if there is no new product to stock.



Merchandising & Stocking Checklist

This checklist will guide you through the steps of merchandising and stocking produce in your food shelf. It accompanies our webinar on increasing demand for produce, available at www.thefoodgroupmn.org.

Display Preparation

Cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean the coolers, shelves, and baskets. <input type="checkbox"/> Clean the surfaces of any display tables. <input type="checkbox"/> Check that the baskets are in good condition.
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Merchandising

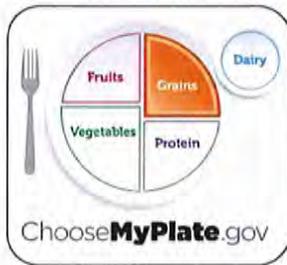
Size	<input type="checkbox"/> Choose appropriate basket or fridge to display the produce that you have.
Categorizing	<input type="checkbox"/> Produce is sorted by category (i.e. fruits are together, vegetables are together) <input type="checkbox"/> Fruits and vegetables are sorted by type (i.e. citrus, pit fruits, and pomes)
Placement	<input type="checkbox"/> Decide what produce is more exotic and difficult to move. <input type="checkbox"/> Place exotic, slow moving produce among staple items (i.e. kale with lettuce)
Abundance	<input type="checkbox"/> Display appears abundant with fruits and vegetables. <input type="checkbox"/> Use fronting or consolidating methods when running low on produce.
Fronting	<input type="checkbox"/> Move items in the fridge from the back to the front to appear abundant. <input type="checkbox"/> Use cans to prop items up so individuals can see what the item is.
Consolidating	<input type="checkbox"/> Consolidate produce neatly into one basket or one fridge when running low.
Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Check to see if produce is running low and restock if necessary. <input type="checkbox"/> Check for moldy and rotten produce and remove it.
Signage	<input type="checkbox"/> Find an appropriate place to hang signage and promote recipe cards. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep recipes well stocked and display recipes based on available produce.
Cross-merchandising	<input type="checkbox"/> Display unrelated grocery items together on a display table or in a visible area. <input type="checkbox"/> Display "We Go Together" sign with a recipe that complements the display.

Stocking

Handling	<input type="checkbox"/> Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before handling produce.
Sorting	<input type="checkbox"/> Remove moldy or rotten produce items before stocking. <input type="checkbox"/> Toss bad produce into a waste or compost bin.
Rotating	<input type="checkbox"/> Restock using FIFO (first in first out). Pull older produce to the front. <input type="checkbox"/> Stock newest produce in the back of the fridge or at the bottom of display.
Culling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remove damaged or decaying produce on the shelves.

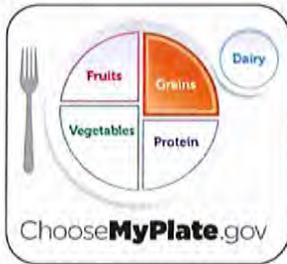
Nudges: Signage with Shelf Tags

Placing materials, such as shelf tags, that highlights specific attributes of a particular item at strategic locations can work to increase an items salience or prominence. Print and cut these labels and place them with correlating food items in your food bank or agency to encourage healthy eating, by making the healthy choice the easy choice.



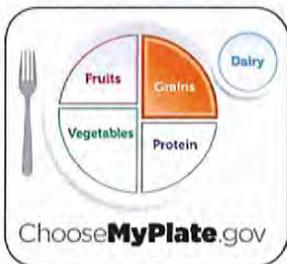
Grains

Add sweetness to your whole-grain cereals with fruit. Top cereal with sliced bananas, canned peaches, raisins, or frozen fruit!



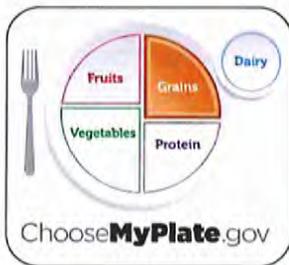
Grains

Mix whole-grain cereal with unsalted nuts and dried fruit for a great afternoon snack.



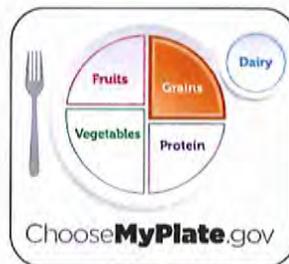
Grains

Whole grains are good for your health! Make at least half of your grains whole to get the benefits.



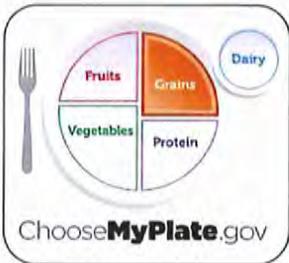
Grains

Make mini pizzas with open face whole-wheat English muffins. Top with sauce, veggies, and low-fat cheese for a tasty treat!



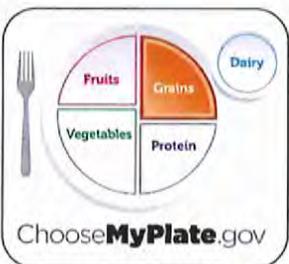
Grains

Some whole grains are a good source of fiber. Look for breads that have at least 3 grams of fiber per serving on the label.



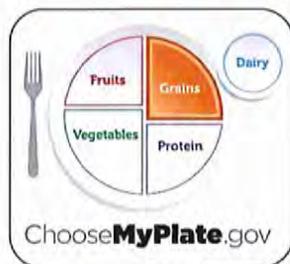
Grains

Try rolled oats or crushed, unsweetened whole-grain cereal as breading for baked chicken, fish, or eggplant parmesan.

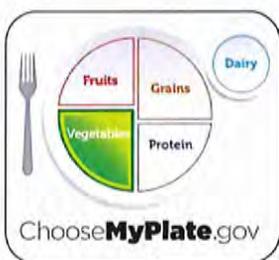


Grains

Get your whole grains by adding brown rice to soup for a hearty meal.

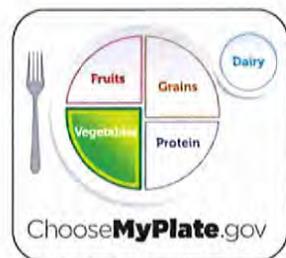


Grains



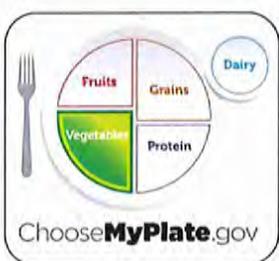
Vegetables

Grill vegetables kabobs as part of a barbecue meal. Try tomatoes, mushrooms, green peppers, and onions.



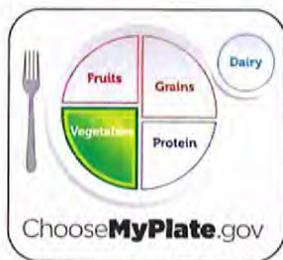
Vegetables

Don't know what to do with leftovers? Puree roasted vegetables with chicken stock to make a hearty and flavorful soup.



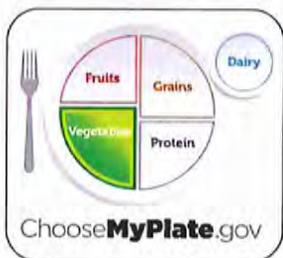
Vegetables

Looking for a new way to eat Brussels sprouts? They can be boiled, sautéed, or oven roasted to go with any meal.



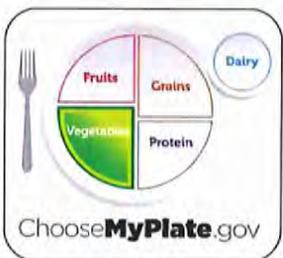
Vegetables

Make vegetables part of your lunch every day by eating veggie wraps, pizzas, or sandwiches.



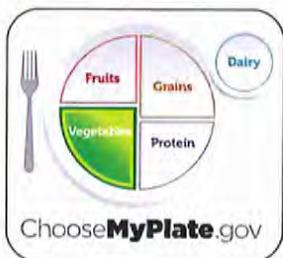
Vegetables

Try crunchy vegetables, raw or lightly steamed. They make a great snack or side dish!



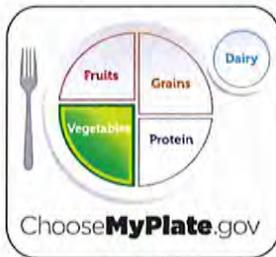
Vegetables

Make mini pizzas using a portabella mushroom for the crust. Top with sauce, veggies, low-fat mozzarella cheese, and broil.



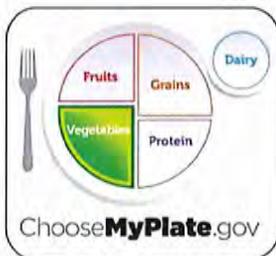
Vegetables

Use dark leafy greens, like romaine lettuce and spinach, to make salads. Add red and orange veggies for extra color and nutrition!



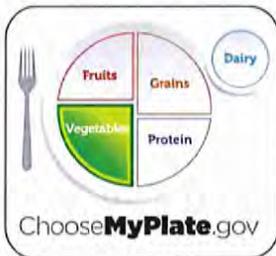
Vegetables

Add pureed vegetables, like carrots, sweet potatoes, and beans to soup for a thicker, heartier texture.



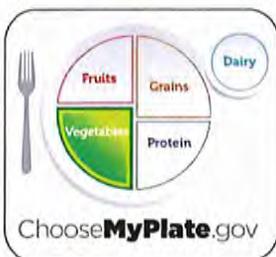
Vegetables

Cook it once, eat it twice!
Make extra veggies and save some for later. Use them for a stew, soup, or pasta dish.



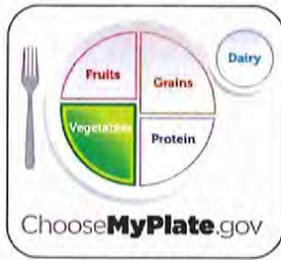
Vegetables

Shred carrots or zucchini into meatloaf, casseroles, quick breads, and muffins.



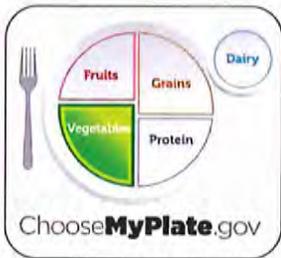
Vegetables

Add extra chopped vegetables (tomatoes, mushrooms, onions, or spinach) to store-bought pasta sauce. Simmer until veggies are tender.



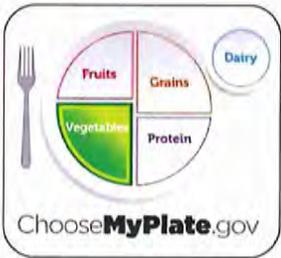
Vegetables

Make roasted tomatoes. Cut tomatoes into wedges, drizzle with olive oil, season with garlic and herbs. Roast and serve as a side dish.



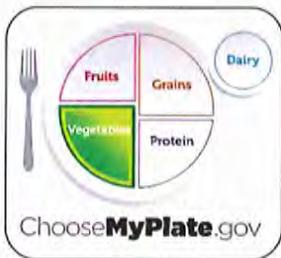
Vegetables

Enjoy preparing foods in different ways. You can steam, grill, stir-fry, roast, or stew your vegetables for a change in texture and flavor.

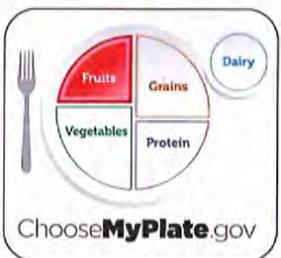


Vegetables

Make a yummy homemade veggie lasagna. Layer pasta, cooked veggies, tomato sauce, and sprinkle with low-fat cheese. Bake until ready!



Vegetables



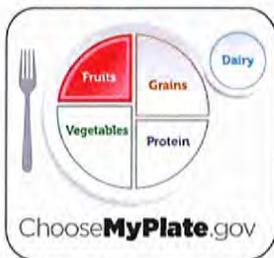
Fruits

For dessert, have a baked apple or pear.



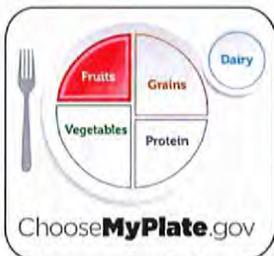
Fruits

Need a snack?
Spread peanut butter on
apple slices or top frozen
yogurt with berries or
slices of kiwi fruit.



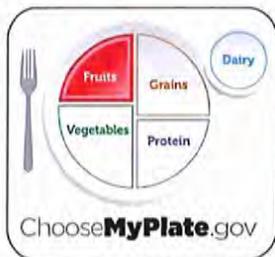
Fruits

Keep frozen blueberries on hand.
They make a great topping at
breakfast for oatmeal, yogurt,
or mixed into pancakes!



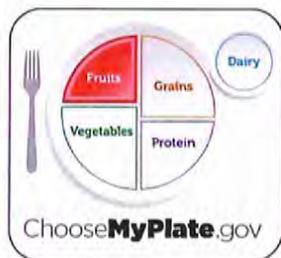
Fruits

Include fruit at dinner!
Add crushed pineapple to
coleslaw or include orange
sections or grapes in a salad.



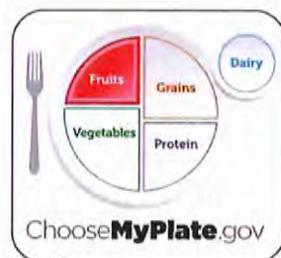
Fruits

Add fruit like pineapple or
fresh chunks of peaches to
vegetable and meat kabobs.



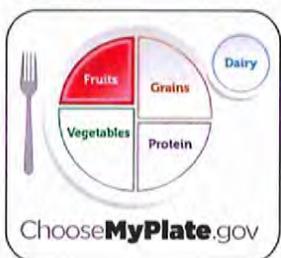
Fruits

Add fruit like sliced apples, pears, or a few berries to your salad bowl.



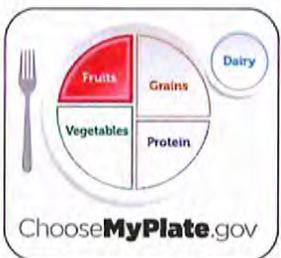
Fruits

Need a dip for your fruit? Mix plain yogurt with a dash of vanilla, or add your favorite spices, like cinnamon, for a new flavor.



Fruits

Add halved grapes to your chicken salad. Serve on a bed of greens or in a pita sandwich.



Fruits



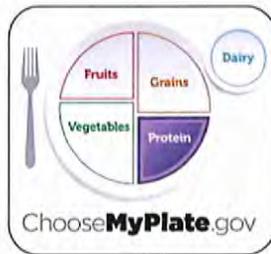
Protein Foods

For an easy supper slow cook skinned chicken pieces, veggies, and seasonings in low-sodium chicken broth.



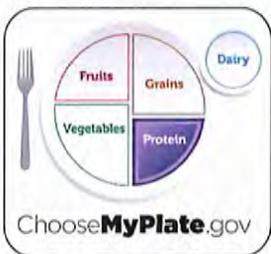
Protein Foods

Roasted pork tenderloin goes well with fruit. Serve with a fruit salad or a fruit salsa.



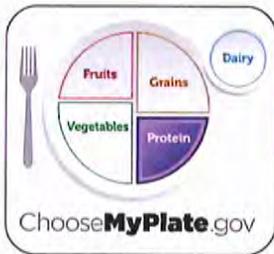
Protein Foods

Chicken and white bean chili is a tasty way to combine protein foods with a great flavor and bounty of nutrients.



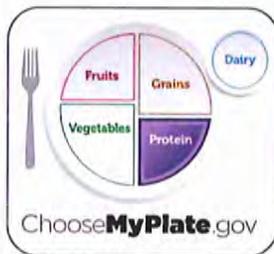
Protein Foods

Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Include some seafood high in omega-3s like salmon, trout, or herring.



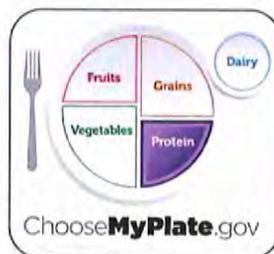
Protein Foods

Baking or grilling seafood high in omega-3s, like salmon, trout, and herring, makes a quick and easy dinner.



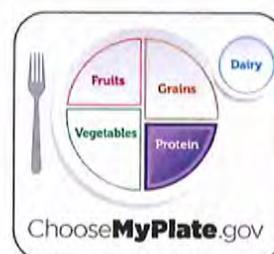
Protein Foods

Add protein to your salads. Try different ingredients like eggs, tuna, grilled shrimp, chickpeas, or black beans.



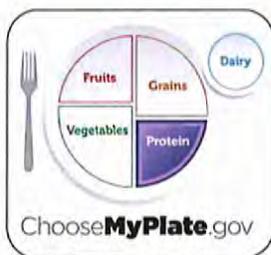
Protein Foods

For a quick supper, simmer boneless skinless chicken breasts in tomato sauce with veggies and Italian seasonings. Serve over pasta.



Protein Foods

Add a vegetarian protein food to make a salad into a main dish - try garbanzo beans, kidney beans, soybeans, or sunflower seeds.



Protein Foods

Broil or bake chicken breasts marinated in lemon juice, oregano, garlic, and oil for Mediterranean style flavor.



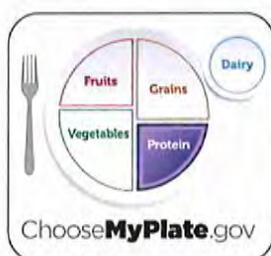
Protein Foods

Build a meal around beans or peas. Bean burritos are a quick and easy dinner entrée.



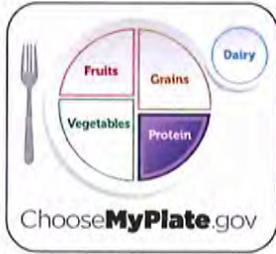
Protein Foods

Peanut butter adds protein to a snack. Try it on apple slices, celery, whole grain crackers, or a small square of dark chocolate.



Protein Foods

Much of the fat in chicken and turkey is in or under the skin. Remove skin and fat for a leaner, healthier meal.



Protein Foods

Serve “beans and greens” - add cooked cannellini beans to cooked, drained kale. Season with pepper, lemon juice, and oil.

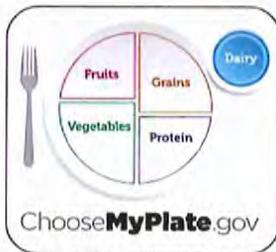


Protein Foods

A chicken salad with chicken breast chunks, romaine lettuce, veggies, and vinaigrette makes a great lunch or dinner.

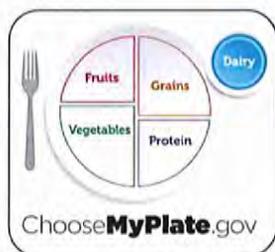


Protein Foods



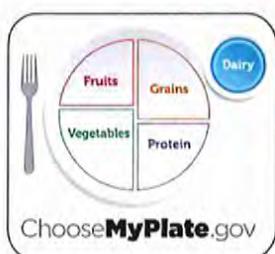
Dairy

To get calcium at lunch, use low-fat cheese on your sandwich.



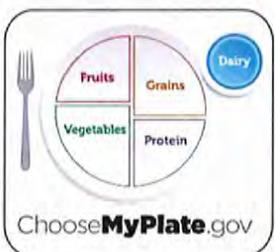
Dairy

Whole milk and regular cheese are higher in saturated fat. Low-fat or fat-free versions have the calcium without the fat.



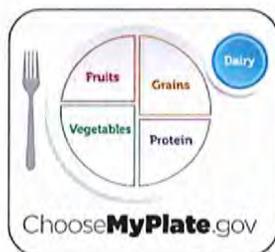
Dairy

Make a switch to fat-free milk. If you currently drink whole milk, first switch to 2%, then 1%, and then fat-free (skim).



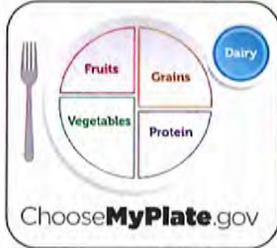
Dairy

Combine plain yogurt with your favorite low-fat salad dressing for a different veggie dip.



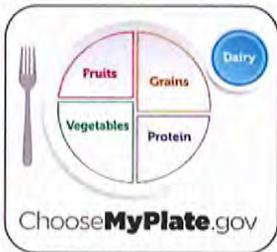
Dairy

For dessert, try low-fat yogurt or pudding as a dip for fruits like strawberries or melon balls



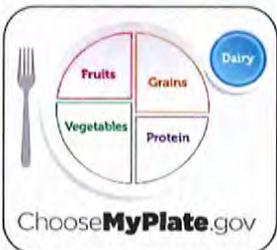
Dairy

Cook your oatmeal or other hot cereal in fat-free or low-fat milk instead of water.



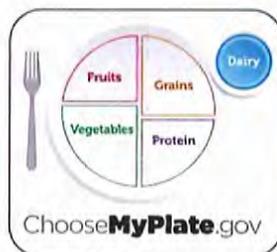
Dairy

Greek yogurt makes a great substitute for sour cream - it's thick and rich tasting!



Dairy

Look for lower fat cheeses like part-skim mozzarella, or reduced fat versions of Monterey Jack, Swiss, Colby, Cheddar, and Muenster.



Dairy